



Form, content, craft and the individual lyric

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Abstract

This research, conducted through reflective compositional practice, examined and experimented with the lyrical elements of form, content and craft. The project investigated how the songwriter may utilise these elements to fulfil the potential of a song, and examined ways in which the individuality of the lyricist could be enhanced. A key output of this research was a folio of original songs including two albums, *The Last Polaroid* (2017) and *Nylon String Songs* (2018). The twenty songs in the folio demonstrate the effective deployment of a range of lyrical elements, including the use of the cognitive length of line, the influential authority of rhyme and rhythm, how sections of variation and repetition organise detail, depth and sonority, how patterns of sound and image intensify sense, and how shapes can inform consequence to allow finer textures to present more immediately. Analysis and critical reflection on poetic and lyrical models from Sappho to Shakespeare to Sondheim that guide the lyrical process are presented in the exegesis, along with a discussion of the key lyrical elements of the songs contained in the folio. The research revealed the deep-seated charm and power of the song form itself, and the potential to harness its adaptability for individual content. The research recognised the appropriate organisation of lyrical elements that then leads to their concealment and enables the engagement and seduction of which songs are capable. This research represents a significant contribution to the literature on techniques of successful songwriting and identifies strategies of relevance to aspiring songwriters.

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Preface: An introduction to Charles Jenkins

The whole thing is long view – Ben Ratliff¹

The folio and exegesis examine the lyrical elements of form, content and craft. These elements can collectively enhance the individuality necessary for a long and fruitful songwriting career. They enable a songwriter to produce a catalogue of songs that enthrall the first time they enter the ear, and continue to reward upon repeated play, elements the songwriter can utilise to fulfil a song's potential in union with melody, harmony and rhythm.

In my own songwriting career, I have been fortunate enough to write, record and release albums that have garnered highly favourable reviews and have led to tours, sales and subsequent recordings over decades.² However, it was not until I undertook a project involving performances where audiences were listening to nothing but new songs that I began to comprehend the hit-and-miss trajectory of my own work. I had been carrying the curious notion that once the listener took my record home, put headphones on, perhaps poured a nice wine, and listened to the song a few times, it would then begin to make sense and resonate. In that scenario, the song striking its target was dependent upon the listener giving their time, rather than me putting in the time required to provide a lyric perfectly wedded to melody, harmony and rhythm to best serve the idea. Instead of delivering riffs still in need of a song or pretty chords still in search of an idea, it was up to me to provide the lyrical form, content and craft that completed what the riff or the pretty chords suggested. The songs didn't have to be simpler, or 'straighter'; rather, all their elements had to be united, working in the same direction to maximise each of the other elements, to make those sad songs sadder, and the happy ones stupidly happy.

For over a decade, my role as a songwriting mentor and teacher took me from universities to secondary schools, to youth justice centres, and to safe houses for young adults with drug and alcohol related issues and mental health concerns, from small groups to large, from one-on-

¹ Ben Ratliff, *Every Song Ever* (London UK: Penguin Random House, 2017), 123.

² See Appendix 3

one workshops to lecture halls with audiences numbering in the hundreds. My teaching in the field has led to observations relating to the impact of environment, education and motivation on a songwriter's approach to the development of content, form and craft. I noticed that some songwriting students were 'slaves to form',³ applying a singular form to accommodate all manner of content. This not only produced an imbalance between form and content that revealed their attempts at craft, but stifled an individuality of expression. As a result, the explained story behind the song was often more captivating than the song itself. Detail, excitement and distinctiveness had been discarded in the process of turning the story into a song. The phrases, melodies, chords, rhythms and structures chosen only served to standardise a once idiosyncratic tale, to where the song and story bore little resemblance to each other. The form was censoring the content, limiting its possibilities of scope and uniqueness.

Elsewhere, those not interested in pursuing music as a career but solely as a means of expression could be 'slaves to content'. These writers put themselves into their songs, out of necessity, to share with and connect to their friends – their audience. Whilst displaying urgency in the performance of detailed experience, the methods of expression utilised could also impede their distinctiveness and scope of content. This imbalance of form and content was limiting the power, potential, and possibility of the song. The lack of focus meant that the content's uniqueness dissipated upon delivery. The content had not found the best form, the best vehicle of delivery.

These two sides – form-focused and content-centred – can of course be balanced. Well-established artists manage to make good of the fertile ground between individuality and craft, between artistry and industry. In an earlier life, my work in record stores taught me that artists who follow their own distinctive course continually affect people, year in, year out, regardless of current trends. In the 'B' section alone – artists such as Beck, Bowie, Bjork, Beatles – have at least three things in common: a knowledge of their own art form, an immersion in many other art forms and a strong work ethic. With knowledge of their own and other art forms, these artists have recognised the freedom and power of the song form via its

³ "Oscar Hammerstein II on Songwriting", posted on July 17, 2014 by Alexander Massey, accessed May 4, 2016, <http://oxfordsongwriting.com/oscar-hammerstein-ii-on-songwriting/>

capability to be varied and modified dependent upon the detail enclosed, in order to maintain, enhance and encourage the expressiveness of the content. They do not lose their individuality in the pursuit of their craft, on the contrary, they master their craft effectively to heighten and celebrate their individuality.

At the beginning of this research, my understanding of why certain songs I wrote worked and why some didn't was unclear. Sometimes I was unable to explain my misgivings precisely, nor to identify their faults. Over the duration of this research, I have become more adept at pinpointing problems in my own songs and those of the students I work with. I've become more proficient at identifying what is missing when a song is not fulfilling and propelling the inception idea. This research has produced a folio that demonstrates a knowledge and understanding of how combinations of form, content and craft can enhance an artist's individual expressiveness.

My own set list of songs has long been inspired by the audience, but rather than yielding to their every exhortation, I want to evoke an experience. I wanted to write better songs so I could make people laugh, cry, and dance – where the set list was the star of the show, not me. And so where is the waltz? The lullaby? The showstopper? The opening number? The list always needs more, it always wants more, and that is fine. If each song is written so that it fulfils its distinctive potential, I merely have to turn up and play as best I can. As they say, everything has already been said, but not by me in my own way, and not by any songwriter seeking an originality of expression than can lead to a fulfilling, sustaining career.

Introduction

What works in a song and what does not? What engages our attention? “What is it about certain songs and poems that make us want to learn them by heart?”⁴ Why did Nietzsche observe, “[E]ven the wisest amongst us occasionally becomes a fool for rhythm?”⁵ Or Robert von Hallberg write, “Language that has been made to sing may be presumed to have just authority?”⁶ For all our common emotions and language, Brian Boyd notes that it is how we combine our words that manifests our individuality and originality.⁷ As songwriting students, teachers and practitioners we need to identify, examine, evaluate and employ what enables this engagement, authority and individuality. We need to understand the elements that make people want to memorise and recite, dance and sing along, empathise and be inspired by song.

The notion that “art is the concealment of art”⁸ is an understanding that any successful piece of art hides the work involved. It conceals the craft so that the art appears to have fallen unhindered from the artist responsible. The resourcefulness required for this ‘hiding’ process involves an accrual of abilities and industry. The lyricist “has no metronome, no inventors of scales or theoreticians of harmony”,⁹ and therefore an aim of the research is to provide the lyricist with the lyrical elements required for this concealment of craft and reveal of art and individuality. The exegesis contextualises the song writing practices underpinned in the twenty songs contained in the folio. It will show that when the lyrical elements of form and content are crafted together they enhance the individuality of the songwriter.

Chapter One assesses the elements of form: line, rhyme, rhythm, sectioning, variation, repetition, title, verse and chorus. It analyses their capabilities individually and collectively via a set of highly respected songs. Chapter Two examines content and its lyrical elements of sound, image, sense, patterns, the personal and universal, and charms, again via highly

⁴ Jonathan D. Culler, *Theory of the Lyric* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), 14-15.

⁵ Friedrich Nietzsche as cited in Culler, 134.

⁶ Robert von Hallberg as cited in Culler, 134.

⁷ Brian Boyd, *Why Lyrics Last: Evolution, Cognition and Shakespeare's Sonnets* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), 50.

⁸ Leonard Cohen as cited in Paul Zollo, *Songwriters on Songwriting*, 4th ed. (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo, 2003), 340.

⁹ Robert von Hallberg, *Lyric Powers* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 162.

respected songs. It further observes the poetic and lyrical techniques that best serve the modern songwriter. Chapter Three investigates craft and its intersections and interactions within content and form: the parameters involved, the detail, and the unity required to ultimately lead to a concealment of craft and the expressiveness of the individual. Chapter Four highlights what is of benefit to the lyricist via an examination of 20 original songs by the author, detailing elements of form, content and craft.

The exegesis does not specifically focus on melody, harmony, musical rhythm, poetic techniques or the creative process. It does, however, reference all throughout, due to their fundamental involvement with lyric, and addresses their combinations in the pursuit of an individual practice. Included are examinations on the craft and works of poets, artists and musicians that are of relevance to the contemporary songwriter.

Howard Nemerov wrote that lyric poetry, due to its “power of immense implication in a confined space – a great reckoning in a little room – is perpetually in danger of preferring gesture to substance.”¹⁰ The same applies to song; the song form itself can charm the listener and camouflage a lack of content or individuality. The artist who loses sight of their responsibilities to their art form, that is, to fuse individual content with best use form, is shortcutting their craft, art, their audience and themselves. However, when the lyrical idea is distilled for delivery, in harmony with itself, crafted to resonate further, then the artist is one to be reckoned with.

Methodology

This research seeks to establish an analytical and comprehensive understanding of the lyrical elements that lead to the individuality of the lyricist through creative practice. The project identifies, qualifies and organises twenty-one lyrical elements into three groups of form, content and craft, and seeks a systematic approach to the production of the individual lyric. The outcomes of the research are presented as a folio of original songs with an accompanying exegesis that contextualises the creative process and works. The folio of this submission is notionally weighted at 80% and the exegesis at 20%, but is examined as a unified whole.

¹⁰ Howard Nemerov, *Journal of the Fictive Life* (Chicago, ILL: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 21.

The research questions that underpinned this enquiry through creative practice included investigation of how historical poetic forms might contribute to a contemporary songwriting practice, and the similarities and differences between poetry and song lyric. The following questions were posed about the nature of lyrics: Do certain subject matters best suit a particular lyrical form? Must lyric always develop in conjunction with melody and rhythm to deliver the song's potential? Key to the study was the question of whether an understanding and identification of the individual aspects of form, content and craft could guide their applications and their relationships. In exploring this craft in depth the following questions came to the fore: Can the best implementation of these lyrical elements conceal their involvement? How can form, content and craft lead to the individual lyric? How can this identification and organisation aid the songwriting practitioner, teacher and student?

To answer the research questions, the initial process involved research into poetic verse forms including sonnets, villanelles, ballads, odes and the elegy, as well as a survey of literature in the field and the identification and analysis of characteristic features of poetic forms considered applicable to the contemporary lyricist. A pre-folio period included experimentation with writing original lyrics conforming to the patterns of chosen verse forms and experimentation with contemporary music setting of existing poetic verse forms. These processes noted both the advantages and limitations within strict forms, which led further to the exploration of understandings of the relationships between content and form, and how best to craft each to the other for the individual lyric. The research's second phase began with a survey of literature in the field and identification and analysis of characteristic features of lyric applicable to the contemporary lyricist, and then moved into an identification of the similarities and differences between poetry and lyric and the identification and organisation of the lyrical elements. The final stage of the research involved the utilisation of lyrical elements in the compilation and recording of the folio and the representation of lyrical elements in the folio that is the basis for the reflection that underpins Chapter Four of the exegesis.¹¹ The methodological framework developed in the course of this research may also be of direct relevance to students and teachers of lyric writing, and contributes to the literature on the craft of song writing.¹²

¹¹ Anne-Marie Forbes, "Doctoral Research through Music Performance: The Role of the Exegesis" in *Doctoral Writing In The Creative and Performing Arts*, eds. Louise Ravelli, Bruce Paltridge and Sue Starfield (Oxfordshire UK: Libri Publishing, 2011), 275.

¹² Forbes, 275.

Auto-ethnographic approach

As stated in the Preface, observations regarding artists who have obtained an individuality of output led to the main research question, namely: Would a clearer understanding of the elements involved in form, content and craft, and their subsequent relationships, lead to a comprehensive understanding of the production of an individual lyric? To extend the personal observations detailed in the Preface, the framing of twenty-one lyrical techniques into three categories required a methodology that provided means to isolate and link form, content, and craft in the pursuit of an individual practice.

As auto-ethnography is “both process and product”¹³ and capable of “producing meaningful, accessible, and evocative research grounded in personal experience”¹⁴ while also capable of expanding and broadening rigid research definitions,¹⁵ it lent itself to be appropriately utilised in answering the research questions. Upon investigation, an auto-ethnographic approach developed that was in part “reflexive”, whereby the researcher learns as a result of the research,¹⁶ in part a “layered accounts” methodology, as “the data collection and analysis proceeded simultaneously”,¹⁷ and in part a “personal narrative”, in so far as to ultimately “invite readers to enter the author’s world and use what they learn”¹⁸ in their own lyrical practice. These various auto-ethnographic methods were combined, as they worked best to “discern patterns”¹⁹ of evidence and also utilise these ‘patterns’ to produce a body of work both meaningful and engaging, potentially reaching a wider and more diverse audience than traditional research.

¹³ Carolyn Ellis, Tony E. Adams and Arthur P. Bochner, “Autoethnography: An Overview”, *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 12(1), Art. 10, <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1589/3095>

¹⁴ Carolyn Ellis and Arthur Bochner, “Autoethnography, personal narrative, reflexivity” (2000), as cited in Ellis, Adams and Bochner, 2.

¹⁵ Tony Adams, “Speaking for others: Finding the ‘whos’ of discourse” (2005), Julie Wood, “Gendered lives: Communication, gender, and culture” (2009), as cited in Ellis, Adams and Bochner, 2.

¹⁶ Carolyn Ellis, *The Ethnographic I: A methodological novel about autoethnography* (2004), as cited in Ellis, Adams and Bochner, 5.

¹⁷ Kathy Charmaz, “The grounded theory method: An explication and interpretation” (1983), as cited in Ellis, Adams and Bochner, 5.

¹⁸ Ellis (2004), as cited in Ellis, Adams and Bochner, 6.

¹⁹ Ellis, Adams and Bochner, 4.

Furthermore, this “research from the inside”²⁰ auto-ethnographic approach best illustrated and demonstrated the intricacies of lyric writing. The approach involved surveying poetic and lyrical literature and examples, identifying, qualifying and organising the lyrical elements. This provided a clear logical framework within which they could then be applied through practice to deliver the folio and findings of Chapter Four. While aware of the aesthetic, emotional and therapeutic nature of lyric writing,²¹ a degree of objectivity was achieved by the using the same rigorous, theoretical and analytical approach to the folio and in Chapter Four. This included framing the analysis of ‘Own Songs’ using methods paralleling those employed in the analysis of well-established lyric in the first three chapters, thus highlighting the representation of the key lyrical elements established in the research. Another observation put forward in the Preface – that individuality is an intrinsic factor in determining artistic longevity, and is an outcome of a healthy representation from the three groups (form, content and craft) – is also ratified via lyrical and poetic examples utilised in these first three chapters. Finally, as foreshadowed in the Introduction, the question of whether any successful piece of art conceals the work involved in its production is answered objectively as best as possible by the lyrical and poetic examples and methods presented in both the exegesis and the folio.

Literature review

The following resource materials have provided a wealth of information that the folio and exegesis seeks to apply. A significant contributor to the field of lyric writing is Pat Pattison, a Berklee College of Music poetry and lyric writing teacher of 30 years’ experience. In the *Essential Guide to Lyric Form and Structure*,²² Pattison details the relationships between line number and length that either stop or propel motion to serve three purposes: to spotlight important ideas, move one section forward into another section, and contrast one section with another. He further details the characteristics of the “Structural Pentad” – “balance, pace, flow, closure and the type of closure”²³ – that can be applied to rhythm and rhyme as well as musical structure. Pattison also expounds the concepts of matching the lyrical and musical

²⁰ Greg Arnold, “Writing Songs and Writing a Record: Inside the Composition of an Acoustic Pop Album” (PhD.diss. University Of Tasmania, 2013), 17.

²¹ Ellis, Adams and Bochner, 8.

²² Pat Pattison, *Essential Guide to Lyric Form and Structure*, 2nd ed. (Boston MA: Berklee Press, 1991).

²³ Pattison, *Form and Structure*, 28.

phrase and how configurations of rhyme, rhythm and line provide the movement of emotion and meaning. In *The Essential Guide to Rhyming*,²⁴ Pattison points out that in lyric, rhyme organises structure, creates and controls movement and supports meaning via different rhyme types and schemes. He presents a scale of rhyming that according to its strength of resolution determines the support of an emotional scale. In Chapter Eight of this book Pattison examines “Sonic Bonding”²⁵, namely the use of internal rhyme, assonance, alliteration, prosody and juncture to collectively support meaning. He details the phonetic relationships (plosives/fricatives/nasals) in lyric, and the combinations of rhyme types and their employment via variations in rhyme scheme that best support the lyric as a whole. The exegesis also takes note of Pattison’s identification of the similarities and differences between poetry and lyric and the subsequent consequences to the modern lyricist.²⁶

Stephen Sondheim²⁷ similarly discusses the differences between poetry and lyric, reasoning that lyric must leave room for the music to take effect, and that poetry contains its own music. He examines perfect rhyme and elements of craft presented by previous lyricists, and provides his maxims of songwriting²⁸ that assist the organisation of Chapter Three of the exegesis. Another significant contributor to the field of lyric writing, Sheila Davis,²⁹ is also referenced with regard to the differences between poetry and lyric, as is her analysis of the lyric to best suit content, placement of title, point of view, maintaining emotional tone, compression, clarity, the power of repetition, the use of rhyme, the rise of near rhyme, the use of the specific, placing words to music, the personal and universal, and the processes involved in all of the above. Jimmy Webb³⁰ delves into the writing process with discourses on rhyme types, placement, and schemes, and their effects on melody; how rhyme and the tight parameters of lyric can lead to originality; and also how chord structure influencing melody and form, and metre-directing lyric, can all lead to uniqueness. Furthermore, Webb discusses the use of everyday expressions for naturalness in songwriting, and the in-built lyrical potential a song’s title can provide.

²⁴ Pat Pattison, *The Essential Guide to Rhyming* (Boston MA: Berklee Press, 1991).

²⁵ Pat Pattison, *The Essential Guide to Rhyming* (Boston MA: Berklee Press, 1991), 61.

²⁶ Pat Pattison, *Lyric Writing vs Poetry*, published Nov 10, 2009, accessed July 4, 2016, <http://www.writersdigest.com/qp7-migration-books/writing-better-lyrics-interview>

²⁷ Stephen Sondheim, *Finishing the Hat: Collected Lyrics (1954-1981) with Attendant Comments, Principles, Heresies, Grudges, Whines and Anecdotes* (New York: Knopf, 2010).

²⁸ “Content Dictates Form; Less Is More; God Is in the Details; all in the service of Clarity without which nothing else matters.” Sondheim, xv.

²⁹ Sheila Davis, *The Craft of Lyric Writing* (Cincinnati: Ohio: Writer’s Digest Books, 1985).

³⁰ Jimmy Webb, *Tunesmith: Inside the Art of Songwriting* (New York: Hyperion, 1998).

Brian Boyd³¹ notes the evolutionary understanding of the information inherent to patterns, of lyric's quick access to the human brain via the cognitive length of the average lyrical line, how patterns remove the lyricist from the necessity of narrative, and how the listener's own imagination fulfils the image provided, fostering the resonating response. Jonathan Culler³² examines the poetic function of language, the sequences of sound that propel repetition and their seductive, authentic and authorising consequences. He assesses the pivotal role that rhythm and rhyme play in language and how they supply an impenetrable charm that goes beyond comprehension. He examines how the enchantment of rhythm and rhyme, intertwined, can disguise itself, undercut intelligence, and bring pleasure and an uncanny satisfaction to the listener.

W.R. Johnson,³³ particularly in Chapter Two, 'Praise and Blame', in *The Idea of Lyric*, establishes what the modern day lyricist can learn from the ancient Greek poet Sappho, namely the importance of the hearer in the empowering of the speaker, the importance of rest and motion and of compression and precision. He also highlights Sappho's skills of observation, clarity, contemplation, passion, empathy and intellectual might to enable a work to operate at private and public levels.

Andrew Welsh's *Roots of Lyric*³⁴ examines the writings of Northrop Frye, Ezra Pound and Aristotle, and their importance in the examination of the verbal art of lyric. The sound, the visual and the combination of both are shown to be the basic building blocks of lyric and Welsh deems their relationships integral for effective structure and outcome. He further examines the charm elements of lyric and song: the incantation, chant, pulse and physical response, the riddles, emblems and images, the charging of words with meaning above their plain meaning, and the processes of seeing, knowing and naming. Welsh discusses the rhythms of lyric, where the power of words lies more in sound patterns than in literal

³¹ Brian Boyd, *Why Lyrics Last: Evolution, Cognition and Shakespeare's Sonnets* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012).

³² Jonathan D. Culler, *Theory of the Lyric* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015).

³³ W. R. Johnson, *The Idea of Lyric: Lyric Modes in Ancient and Modern Poetry* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982).

³⁴ Andrew Welsh, *Roots of Lyric: Primitive Poetry and Modern Poetics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978).

meaning, via the work of Blake, Shakespeare, Eskimo chants and the songs of Australian Aborigines.

In Eavon Boland and Mark Strand's *The Making of a Poem*³⁵ they survey poetic forms including the sonnet, the ballad, the sestina, the villanelle, blank verse and the stanza. Of particular interest to the exegesis is their discussion on shaping forms, poems more defined by content than by structure or rhyme scheme, such as the pastoral or the ode. In *Poetic Meter and Poetic Form*³⁶ Paul Fussell discusses the rhythmical and formal properties of poetry, firstly examining 'Poetic Meter': its historical dimensions, its nature, metrical variations and scansion, then 'Poetic Form': its structural principles, the English stanza (fixed form verses nonce form), the critical implications of stanzaic form and poetic conventions. Fussell acknowledges how the form of a poem affects the meaning and impression of the total poem. In *Meter and Meaning: An introduction to rhythm in poetry*³⁷ Thomas Carper and Derek Attridge discuss the rhythms of poetry, including basic rhythms, beats, offbeats, scansion, meter, meaning and forms. Their "beat/offbeat" approach in particular conveys an understanding of the use of rhythm in poems and how to recognize and appreciate the connection between meter and meaning. Similarly, John Lennard's *The Poetry Handbook*³⁸ contains a comprehensive treatise and overview on poetic technique, with an emphasis on poetic process and development via explorations on meter, form, layout, punctuation, lineation, rhyme, diction, syntax, history, biography and gender.

In Chapter Five of *Lyric Powers*, 'Music', Robert von Hallberg³⁹ discusses the conjoining of words and music and its effects via an examination of both the interpretations of American lyricist Johnny Mercer's work, and via a study of Doo-Wop music. He proposes that it is the struggle between semantics and sound that produces the utmost pleasure in lyric. Philip Furia⁴⁰ examines the history (primarily from 1920 to 1940) and development of Tin Pan Alley and of its major lyricists including Cole Porter, Irving Berlin, Ira Gershwin, Lorenz

³⁵ Eavon Boland and Mark Strand, *The Making of a Poem: A Norton Anthology of Poetic Forms* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2001).

³⁶ Paul Fussell, *Poetic Meter and Poetic Form*, (New York: Random House Publishing 1978).

³⁷ Thomas Carper and Derek Attridge, *Meter and Meaning: An introduction to rhythm in poetry*, (New York: Routledge Publishing, 2003).

³⁸ John Lennard, *The Poetry Handbook*, 2nd ed (Oxford UK: Oxford University Press, 2006).

³⁹ Robert von Hallberg, *Lyric Powers* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

⁴⁰ Philip Furia, *The Poets of Tin Pan Alley: A History of America's Great Lyricists* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990).

Hart and Oscar Hammerstein. Furia discusses the sophistication, playfulness and deftness of these lyricists as they fed crooners with expansive and open vowel sounds, in the process establishing a new lyrical vernacular. Of note in his work is the understanding of how new technologies of the period, such as radio and the phonograph, summoned a new lyrical approach, namely an intimacy in lyric writing, one of the self-enclosed song delivered to the solitary listener not the crowd.

Paul Zollo⁴¹ gathers a vast array of information regarding inspiration and process. Of most interest for the research are interviews with Sammy Cahn, Randy Newman, Paul Simon and Leonard Cohen that exemplify ideas put forward by Pattison, Davis, Sondheim and Webb. Similarly, Daniel Rachel's⁴² interviews with English songwriters from Ray Davies to Laura Marling reinforce the work ethic and the idiosyncratic processes attributable to many great writers, concluding, "Their originality is in the revoicing of an influence with creative imagination."⁴³ Richard F Thomas⁴⁴ examines individuality attainable by infusing diverse sources from various art forms. He notes that Bob Dylan's investigation into distinct interests stretches far and wide, and repeatedly finds home in song after song, across decades, with the old song found in the new.⁴⁵ Thomas also highlights the ongoing and long held practice of this technique as used by others, including Virgil and Robbie Burns, and its central place in the artistic craft of transforming existing material into a new work.

A significant influence upon the folio's second album, *Nylon String Songs*, was John Encarnacao's *Punk Aesthetics and New Folk*,⁴⁶ in particular Chapter Seven, 'Punk Aesthetics 2: Lo-Fi'. His observations on lo-fi recordings verses those of a professional recording studio led in part to songs written to be performed live by one guitar and one voice, and recorded in a bedroom by one microphone, with no overdubs – songs whose intimacy would revel in the imperfect and impulsive, in contrast to the multi-layered, considered recordings of *The Last Polaroid*. The folio also benefitted from a multitude of poets and lyricists whose works are referenced in the bibliography and throughout the exegesis.

⁴¹ Paul Zollo, *Songwriters on Songwriting*, 4th Ed. (Cambridge MA: Da Capo, 2003).

⁴² Daniel Rachel, *Isle Of Noises* (London UK: Picador, 2013).

⁴³ Rachel, xii.

⁴⁴ Richard F Thomas, *Why Dylan Matters* (London, UK: Harper Collins, 2017).

⁴⁵ Thomas, 117.

⁴⁶ John Encarnacao, *Punk Aesthetics and New Folk* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

Chapter 1 – Form

This chapter examines the basic building blocks of lyric writing structure, establishes their various capabilities, and their individual and combined potentialities via their use in a number of highly regarded songs. Line, rhyme and rhythm are discussed via the song *Strange Fruit*, variation, repetition and sectioning via Paul Simon's *50 Ways to Leave Your Lover* and title, verse and chorus via another Simon song, *Richard Cory*, and via Harry Carroll and Joseph McCarthy's *I'm Always Chasing Rainbows*, Lucinda Williams' *Lonely Girls* and Bob Dylan's *Blind Willie McTell*.

1.1 Line

Art needs to attract attention, and first impressions count. – Brian Boyd⁴⁷

New York City, 1939, March. The Café Society on West 4th St. The last song of the night. Waiters cease service, the houselights are dimmed, the fire escape doors opened. Such is the incendiary nature of the song that the singer, 23-year-old Billie Holiday, has recently made some swift departures post performance. The song is *Strange Fruit*, written by Abel Meeropol. The piano's opening minor chord and the single spotlight hushes the audience. Holiday steps up, her unwavering voice determined to convey the unnerving scenes.⁴⁸

Southern trees bear strange fruit
Blood on the leaves and blood at the root
Black bodies swinging in the southern breeze
Strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees⁴⁹

The lyric line by its very design is an attention-seeking device.⁵⁰ The average line length of 2-3 seconds fits the recognised cognitive constraints of memory,⁵¹ and as the “present moment

⁴⁷ Brian Boyd, *Why Lyrics Last: Evolution, Cognition and Shakespeare's Sonnets* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), 36.

⁴⁸ David Margolick, *Strange Fruit* (New York: Harper Collins, 2001), 33.

⁴⁹ Abel Meeropol, *Strange Fruit*, Music Sales Corporation, 1937, accessed Oct 27, 2016, <http://www.metrolyrics.com/strange-fruit-lyrics-ella-fitzgerald.html>.

⁵⁰ Boyd, 18.

⁵¹ Boyd, 18.

has supremacy in the listener's consciousness"⁵² the lyricist therefore has the opportunity to capture and captivate the listener with each and every line. The line is able to perform individually, whilst collectively providing an incentive and reward scheme for the listener throughout. The first line is the most important line in any song as it determines "tone, character, information and everything in between".⁵³

Each line has a purpose and a potential to fulfil. In *Strange Fruit* the uniform line length and the even number of lines combine silently to rapidly establish the stable structure required for such content.⁵⁴ The concise, uniform line transports the directness of *Strange Fruit*, and its controlled length provides a stability that "invites closer scrutiny of each line".⁵⁵ Long, meandering lines of variable length would not suit the significance of content, and irregular line length could distract the listener. For the poet, line length is also a visual aspect, but for the lyricist the end of the line means the end of the phrase.⁵⁶ The musical pause at each line's end offers room for images to linger and sounds to suspend,⁵⁷ and when a section has an even number of phrases, as in *Strange Fruit*, the last phrase is the perfect place for the summation of important ideas.⁵⁸

Each line in *Strange Fruit* acts in three ways. It is an image holder – allowing scenes, details and ideas to take place within, "like the rectangular frame of the camera or the circle of light from a flashlight moving down the page".⁵⁹ Second, the line's regularity allows the listener to readily participate in the images and sounds, not distracted by the line itself. Third, the patterned lines subsequently make themselves less and less visible as they are arranged to not only uphold patterns of rhyme and rhythm, but also patterns of tone, character and information. Once established, if any of these patterns were to break down, the spell would

⁵² Howell D. Chickering, Jr, *Introduction to Beowulf* (New York: Anchor Books, Random House, 2006), 17.

⁵³ "Hammerstein...claimed that the opening number is the most important song in a musical because it establishes tone, character, information and everything in between. If that's true (and it is) I would add that for the same reason the first line of any song is the most important line in it..." Stephen Sondheim, *Finishing the Hat: Collected Lyrics (1954-1981) with Attendant Comments, Principles, Heresies, Grudges, Whines and Anecdotes* (New York: Knopf, 2010), 333.

⁵⁴ Pat Pattison, *Writing Better Lyrics* (Cincinnati, Ohio: Writer's Digest Books, 2009), 180-183.

⁵⁵ Boyd, 18.

⁵⁶ Enjambment is not a tool of the lyricist as to bring one line into the next in song, serves to confuse its meaning as it severs the "melodic roadmap and the grammatical structure". Pattison, *Lyric Writing vs Poetry*, published Nov 10, 2009, accessed July 4, 2016, <http://www.writersdigest.com/qp7-migration-books/writing-better-lyrics-interview>

⁵⁷ Boyd, 18.

⁵⁸ Pat Pattison, *Essential Guide To Lyric Form And Structure*, 2nd ed. (Boston MA: Berklee Press), 6.

⁵⁹ Chickering, 17.

be broken, as the listener would be alerted to the lyricist and the work involved.⁶⁰ These patterns of line number and length push the images forward and allow the sounds to resonate further. The line holds the lyric, and the listener participates as the line subsides. The desolate, bleak depictions and the eerie dins of *Strange Fruit* come to the fore. The singer disappears into the night. The song stays.

1.2 Rhyme

Rhyme is a powerhouse – Pat Pattison⁶¹

Just as line length functions to hold image and sound and encourage participation as it recedes into the background, rhyme is also multi-purpose. Able to supply more than mere beginning, internal or end of line decoration,⁶² rhyme provides memory hooks⁶³ that facilitate recall and memorability.⁶⁴ It further shapes structure, and conducts movement within and across lines that construct, connect and control meaning.⁶⁵ Rhyme convinces, has power and lends “authority to lyric pronouncements”.⁶⁶ Its commonality in sound leads to a belief in a commonality in sense of the sentiments expressed. It is no accident that so many proverbs rhyme: “a stitch in time saves nine” not eight or ten,⁶⁷ as rhyme lands ideas and emotions so directly and resolutely, it creates an authority that camouflages its methods. Rhyme is an effect designed for the ear, not the eye, nor the page, and as such is perfectly suited for the lyricist.⁶⁸

Pastoral scene of the gallant south
The bulging eyes and the twisted mouth
Scent of magnolias sweet and fresh

⁶⁰ Randy Newman as cited in Paul Zollo, *Songwriters on Songwriting*, 4th ed. (Cambridge MA: Da Capo, 2003), 274.

⁶¹ Pat Pattison, *The Essential Guide To Rhyming* (Boston MA: Berklee Press, 1991), 34.

⁶² Andrew Welsh, *Roots of Lyric: Primitive Poetry and Modern Poetics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978), 123.

⁶³ Sondheim, 42.

⁶⁴ Jimmy Webb, *Tunesmith: Inside the Art of Songwriting* (New York: Hyperion, 1998), 68.

⁶⁵ Pattison, *Rhyming*, 25.

⁶⁶ According to American rapper Jay-Z’s summation of the O.J. Simpson case; ‘glove don’t fit’ rhymed with ‘acquit’, and gave a great sound bite for the media “... as persuasive as the hook in a hit song” Culler, 184.

⁶⁷ Jonathan D. Culler, *Theory of the Lyric* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), 183

⁶⁸ Pattison, *Form and Structure*, 34.

Then the sudden smell of burning flesh⁶⁹

Rhyme, like all aspects of form, is at its best when crafted to serve content. The rhyme type chosen is the one that best suits the delivery of the idea. The perfect rhymes in *Strange Fruit* support the strength of resolution⁷⁰ as well as the reinforcement of theme by stressing significant connections of meaning between the rhyming words (“gallant south/twisted mouth”).⁷¹ The rhyme type ensures the connection between the lines, and the rhyme scheme (aabb) controls movement throughout the verse as it pinpoints line’s end. The crafted rhyming word falls easily on the ear as the preceding lines combine to endorse and qualify its place at line’s end. Rhyme done well provides connections that are “sensuously bewitching”,⁷² but misused can reveal trivial and “facile connections”⁷³ of shallowness and glibness. A deft balance⁷⁴ of surprise and anticipation is required: when to fulfil probability and when to spoil, to ensure that the rhyming word arrives with meaning, lucidity and memorability. Comparison and contrast, contradiction, complication, simplification, repetition, variation, connections between the senses, sounds and structures, moods and emotions are all part of the process of hiding the work involved in the arrival of the rhyming word. In *Strange Fruit* it is the use of comparison via the senses that empower the rhyming words to make sense, compellingly. The sense of sight in the opening couplet of verse two leads to the sense of smell in the next couplet, with the absorbing nature of sound/rhyme sanctioning the descriptions.⁷⁵

The pleasure of rhyme is one experienced by many yet hard to explain.⁷⁶ It draws the listener in and seduces via what Jonathan Culler labels “the enchantment of rhyme, the magic of sound patterning”.⁷⁷ The use of rhyme in *Strange Fruit* allows the images to land vividly and

⁶⁹ Abel Meerpol, *Strange Fruit*, accessed Oct 27, 2016 <http://www.metrolyrics.com/strange-fruit-lyrics-ella-fitzgerald.html>.

⁷⁰ Pattison, *Form and Structure*, 35.

⁷¹ Welsh, 123.

⁷² Culler, 181.

⁷³ Culler, 181.

⁷⁴ “If one has fundamental things to say in a song, the rhyming becomes a question of deft balancing. A rhyme should be unassertive, never standing out too noticeably. It should, on the other hand, not be a rhyme heard in a hundred other popular songs of the time, so familiar that the listener can anticipate it before it is sung. There should not be too many rhymes”. “Oscar Hammerstein II on Songwriting”, posted on July 17, 2014 by Alexander Massey, accessed May 4, 2016, <http://oxfordsongwriting.com/oscar-hammerstein-ii-on-songwriting/>

⁷⁵ Robert von Hallberg, *Lyric Powers* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 176.

⁷⁶ Culler, 184.

⁷⁷ Culler, 184.

with such resonance that we forget the rhyme, as we forget the line. This essential component of sound allows us to see, feel and inhabit the song.

1.3 Rhythm

Rhythm – the divine, hop, skip and jump. – Friedrich Nietzsche⁷⁸

Like the concealing line and the connecting rhyme, rhythm allows detail and meaning to emerge as its own repeated patterns pull the listener further into the song. Properties of lyrical rhythm include the flow and melody across line lengths due to the stressed (primary and secondary) and unstressed syllables, the recurring sequence of events, and a union with rhyme.⁷⁹ *Strange Fruit* provides the rhythmically merciless “crows to pluck/wind to suck/leaves to drop/bitter crop”. With the repetition of “for” and “here”, and with the reappearance of “fruit” and “strange”, we are drawn in both physically and emotionally. The rhythm plays a principal part in producing a fundamental effect on the listener;⁸⁰ the impact is amplified as each new rhythmic line acts to enlarge each new image.⁸¹

Here is fruit for the crows to pluck
For the rain to gather for the wind to suck
For the sun to rot for the leaves to drop
Here is a strange and bitter crop⁸²

Lines occupied and activated by rhyme and rhythm push the emotion forward. Their structural repetition invites image and sound to dance across them. In fitting the cognitive constraints of memory, rhythm regulates the release of information as it lures the audience in, one segment at a time.⁸³ In *Strange Fruit*, the abundance of stressed one-syllable words aids

⁷⁸ Nietzsche as cited by Culler observes that “even the wisest amongst us occasionally becomes a fool for rhythm – if only insofar as we feel a thought to be truer if simply because it has a metrical form and presents itself with a divine hop, skip, and jump”. Culler, 134.

⁷⁹ “rhyme and rhythm both come from rhythmus”. Culler, 183.

⁸⁰ Culler, 137.

⁸¹ Boyd, 19-20.

⁸² Abel Meerpol, *Strange Fruit*, accessed Oct 27, 2016. <http://www.metrolyrics.com/strange-fruit-lyrics-ella-fitzgerald.html>.

⁸³ Boyd, 18.

the directness of the lyric – “Here/fruit/crows/pluck”. This “stress by importance”⁸⁴ enables the unstressed one-syllable words “is/for/the/to” to not only serve their grammatical function but also set up the expectation of important words to come.⁸⁵ Culler suggests we have a “hunger for rhythmic language”,⁸⁶ offering the rise of rap, with its emphasis on rhythm, as an example,⁸⁷ and adding that if a lyric succeeds beyond normal realms of remembrance and understanding, “it is largely because of its rhythms”.⁸⁸ When combined appropriately line, rhyme and rhythm can create compact and memorable forms because their “concreteness activates and resonates in our imagination, easily recalled and dispensed”.⁸⁹ If the rhythmic structure is sound and entrenched, its roots travel underground to transport and enable all other elements within the lyric to flourish.

“Artists, advertisers and Aristotle have all recognized the centrality of attention for art”⁹⁰ and collectively the effects of line, rhyme, and rhythm make a distinctive demand upon the listener. Howard Goodall regards *Strange Fruit* as “the moment in the development of popular song when it could no longer be dismissed as mere frivolity”.⁹¹ It introduced the idea that “being commercially popular was no longer synonymous with a lack of serious purpose”.⁹² In 1999 *Time* magazine would name *Strange Fruit* the ‘Song of the Century’.⁹³ *Strange Fruit* reminds us of the potency that songs have, when their elements are best placed.

1.4 Sectioning, variation and repetition

All art is built upon variation and repetition – Sheila Davis⁹⁴

As a lyric goes by the ear for the first time the brain identifies and puts to one side what each part of the song is doing.⁹⁵ Sectioning, variation, and repetition help the brain to “chunk”⁹⁶

⁸⁴ Pattison, *Form and Structure*, 21.

⁸⁵ Pattison, *Form and Structure*, 21.

⁸⁶ Culler, 173.

⁸⁷ Culler, 173.

⁸⁸ Culler, 137-138 .

⁸⁹ Boyd, 15.

⁹⁰ Boyd, 45.

⁹¹ Howard Goodall, *The Story of Music* (London: Vintage Random House, 2013), 279.

⁹² Goodall, 279.

⁹³ Accessed Oct 27, 2017, <http://entertainment.time.com/2011/10/24/the-all-time-100-songs/slide/strange-fruit-billie-holiday/>

⁹⁴ Sheila Davis, *The Craft of Lyric Writing* (Cincinnati: Ohio: Writer’s Digest Books, 1985), 219.

⁹⁵ Boyd, 43.

this information to one side. Upon return to the song, now more aware of the song's details, the less anxious brain has more "mental space"⁹⁷ to appreciate the finer details and further delights with subsequent listens. Variation and repetition can occur within the same section, and can be used to both isolate and join sections together. Contrasting sections can transport into "high relief"⁹⁸ the lines and ideas the lyricist wishes to introduce, repeat or highlight,⁹⁹ and the arrangement of these sections of variation and repetition is a key ingredient in the memorability of a song.

Additionally, the primacy of everyday speech, and its stresses, melodies and rhythms enable opportunity for likely sounding variation and repetition in lyric, for melodic intervals to accentuate the melody inherent to words naturally, and for melodic rhythm to accentuate its in-built rhythms.¹⁰⁰ This enhancement of normal speech sanctions a believability that leads to authority and an intimacy as shown in Paul Simon's 1977 song *50 Ways to Leave Your Lover* from his Grammy Award-winning album *Still Crazy After All These Years*.¹⁰¹

Verse: She said it's really not my habit to intrude
For the more I hope my meaning won't be lost or misconstrued
So I repeat myself, at the risk of being cruel
There must be fifty ways to leave your lover, fifty ways to leave your lover
Chorus: Just slip out the back, Jack,
Make a new plan, Stan
Don't need to be coy, Roy, just listen to me
Hop on the bus, Gus,
Don't need to discuss much
Just drop off the key, Lee, and get yourself free¹⁰²

The changes in form from verse to chorus via variations in line number and length, and in rhyme type and scheme, provide opportunity for transitions of characterisation and tone (and

⁹⁶ Boyd, 43.

⁹⁷ Boyd, 43.

⁹⁸ Chickering, 7.

⁹⁹ "The contrast is what gives you control". Pattison, *Form and Structure*, 11.

¹⁰⁰ "Into the Mystic: the aural poetry of Van Morrison". *Popular Music* (1994) Volume 13/1. Cambridge University Press, accessed at University of Tasmania Library, on 01 May 2017, <https://www.cambridge.org/core>

¹⁰¹ Accessed Oct 30, 2017, <https://www.grammy.com/grammys/artists/paul-simon>

¹⁰² Paul Simon, *50 Ways to Leave Your Lover* (Universal Musical Publishing Group, 1977), accessed Oct 27, 2017, <http://www.paulsimon.com/track/50-ways-to-leave-your-lover-6/>.

melody and rhythm) to present different viewpoints. In the verses of *50 Ways to Leave Your Lover* the longer line length befits the singer's ruminations. Come the chorus, the short, sharp, internally rhymed lines create a contrast that matches content.¹⁰³ Shortening the phrase length and bringing the rhyming words closer together support the commands being delivered.¹⁰⁴ Varying the methods of release of information is a part of the musicality. Hallberg writes of lyrical musicality travelling "back and forth between sonority and the sociality of speech".¹⁰⁵ The verse patterns of speech and the chorus patterns of sing-ability allow for "validity of opinion...to emerge".¹⁰⁶ Variations in form reinforce variations in content.

Again a balance is required for the lyricist to construct the best union of variation and repetition. Northrop Frye notes, "Music, of course, is concerned not with beauty of sound but with organisation of sound and beauty".¹⁰⁷ It is the sectioning of detail via the variation and repetition of line, rhyme and rhythm that organises lyrical sound and beauty. In *Lonely Girls*, Lucinda Williams organises subtle variations of repetition to strengthen the sound and beauty of the song.

Lonely girls, lonely girls
 Lonely girls, lonely girls
 Heavy blankets, heavy blankets, heavy blankets
 Cover lonely girls...
 Sparkly rhinestones, sparkly rhinestones, sparkly rhinestones
 Shine on lonely girls
 I oughta know, I oughta know, I oughta know
 About lonely girls¹⁰⁸

Ratliff notes that as repetition of good deeds makes us feel good, repetition is intrinsic to our daily lives¹⁰⁹ and that "good repetition...suggests positive upkeep"¹¹⁰. In lyric, varying

¹⁰³ Pattison, *Writing Better Lyrics*, 237.

¹⁰⁴ "The closer rhymes are to each other, the faster your lyric moves...the further apart they are, the slower you move." Pattison, *Rhyming*, 39.

¹⁰⁵ Hallberg, 185.

¹⁰⁶ Sondheim, 333.

¹⁰⁷ Northrop Frye, *Sound and Poetry: Edited with an Introduction by Northrop Frye* (N.Y: Columbia University Press, 1957), xiii.

¹⁰⁸ Lucinda Williams, *Lonely Girls* (Warner/Chappell Music Inc, Essence-Lost Highway Cat: 170 197-2), 2001.

sections must be structured so that these ‘good’ repetitions are not merely musical manoeuvres, but an essential part of organised sound and beauty to best support the delivery of the idea and reinforce and heighten the emotion of the song.

1.5 Title verse chorus – part one

My job is to not let that listener go. – Frank Loesser¹¹¹

According to a Tin Pan Alley axiom of lyric writing, a good lyric is “one that states the title promptly and then keeps stating it so that the public will remember it”.¹¹² Titles are units of attention – able to attract with rhyme, rhythm and imagery, to thus provoke thought and invite participation. They can pattern a lyric, mapping out what is about to be sung. Paul Simon makes note of certain titles, whereby, “You get the whole story in the title. People relate to their own lives immediately just from the title”.¹¹³ Simon’s own *Still Crazy After All These Years* is one such example, forecasting what is about to be sung and thus allowing further focus on the lyric. Such a title frees the writer “to think more carefully about the finer texture of his verbal effects and about how he will connect or contrast one section with another”.¹¹⁴

Consideration should also be given to a line’s ability to be sung. *I’m Always Chasing Rainbows*¹¹⁵, a title steeped in melody and rhythm¹¹⁶ and “rich in long vowel sounds”,¹¹⁷ is one which resonates when sung. Sheila Davis also advocates the use of rich long vowel sounds (“rain, lime, beer, tote, gloom”) rather than short vowel sounds (“ran, limb, bear, tot, glum”),¹¹⁸ and Hammerstein notes how the right ‘sounding’ word enhances the understanding of a lyric first time through, as it lands on the ear clearly and cleanly:

¹⁰⁹ Ben Ratliff, *Every Song Ever* (London UK: Penguin Random House, 2017), 207.

¹¹⁰ Ratliff, 14.

¹¹¹ Ben Yagoda, *The B Side* (New York: Riverhead/Penguin Random House, 2015), 158.

¹¹² Philip Furia, *The Poets of Tin Pan Alley: A History of America's Great Lyricists* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 72.

¹¹³ Zollo, 104.

¹¹⁴ Chickering, 14.

¹¹⁵ Harry Carroll/Joseph McCarthy, *I’m Always Chasing Rainbows* (McCarthy & Fisher Inc.), 1917.

¹¹⁶ Zollo, 104.

¹¹⁷ Furia, 43.

¹¹⁸ Davis, 208.

[T]he job of the poet is to find the right words in the right place, the word with the exact meaning and the highest quality of beauty or power. The lyric writer must find this word too, but it must be also a word that is clear when sung and not too difficult for the singer to sing on that note which he hits when he sings it.¹¹⁹

Jimmy Webb proposes that the most potent title is one that facilitates numerous possibilities of rhyme/sound, image and sense.¹²⁰ *I'm Always Chasing Rainbows* is a title that effectively provides parameters of creative opportunity and “the forms and the paths to get there”.¹²¹ Its lyric unfolds with internal and end rhyme, with appropriate imagery and structural connectivity to the title, textured and tailored by the melody, rhythm and the ideas inherent to the title.¹²²

I'm always chasing rainbows
Watching clouds drifting by
My schemes are just like all my dreams
Ending in the sky
Some fellows look and find the sunshine
I always look and find the rain
Some fellows make a winning some time
I never even make a gain, believe me
I'm always chasing rainbows
Waiting to find a little bluebird in vain¹²³

Choruses by definition can involve a number of functions including “a part of a song recurring at regular intervals” and “words and melody sung repeatedly”.¹²⁴ Sondheim also states that “a chorus should reflect ideas/thoughts familiar to all, able to be expressed by

¹¹⁹ “Oscar Hammerstein II on Songwriting”. Posted on July 17, 2014 by Alexander Massey, accessed May 4, 2016, <http://oxfordsongwriting.com/oscar-hammerstein-ii-on-songwriting/>

¹²⁰ Webb, 54.

¹²¹ Webb, 104.

¹²² Zollo, 104.

¹²³ Harry Carroll/Joseph McCarthy, *I'm Always Chasing Rainbows*, (McCarthy & Fisher Inc.), 1917.

<https://digitalcommons.conncoll.edu/sheetmusic/642/>

¹²⁴ Merriam-Webster Dictionary, accessed Oct 27, 2016, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/chorus>

all”.¹²⁵ Combinations of these chorus features empower a title to “land with unexpected force”.¹²⁶ *Richard Cory*, originally a poem written in 1897 by Edward Arlington Robinson and re-written in 1965 by Paul Simon, highlights various capabilities of the verse/chorus relationship.¹²⁷

Verse 1: They say that Richard Cory owns one half of this whole town,
With political connections to spread his wealth around
Born into society, a banker's only child,
He had everything a man could want: power, grace, and style.

Chorus: But I work in his factory
And I curse the life I'm living
And I curse my poverty
And I wish that I could be,
Oh, I wish that I could be,
Oh, I wish that I could be Richard Cory¹²⁸

Pattison describes verse function as the following: to introduce ideas, set up, develop and continue ideas and arrange structure.¹²⁹ A chorus is usually a contrasting section, containing a central idea that “completes, comments on or summarises ideas”.¹³⁰ The verse-chorus relationship allows sectioning, variation and repetition to combine the information patterns of verse with the sonic delights of the chorus. The motion from verse to chorus can be utilised to develop the emotion that verse supplies, for the chorus to then magnify.

Verse 3: He freely gave to charity, he had the common touch,
And they were grateful for his patronage and thanked him very much,
So my mind was filled with wonder when the evening headlines read:
“Richard Cory went home last night and put a bullet through his head.”

¹²⁵ Sondheim, 345.

¹²⁶ Webb, 43.

¹²⁷ Sheila Davis analyses this lyric to note the differences between lyric and poetry, observing that with changes to structure, point of view, tense, in utilising specific detail and conversational language, and in the employment of the verse/chorus form, Simon moves the song from poem to lyric. Davis, 9-10.

¹²⁸ Paul Simon, *Richard Cory* (Universal Music Publishing Group, 1965), accessed Oct 27, 2017, <https://www.paulsimon.com/song/richard-cory/>

¹²⁹ Pattison, *Form and Structure*, 53.

¹³⁰ Pattison, *Form and Structure*, 55.

Chorus: But I work in his factory
And I curse the life I'm living
And I curse my poverty
And I wish that I could be,
Oh, I wish that I could be,
Oh, I wish that I could be Richard Cory.

With his recurring chorus Simon meets the need of the listener to have the familiar fulfilled,¹³¹ and significantly in this case, the return of the repetitive summations of the chorus moves the lyric “beyond foreseeable discourse”¹³² and towards an unexpectedly deeper and reverberating meaning. Such is the ability of the title-verse-chorus relationship – providing a musicality that can propel the lyric to a greater meaning and memorability.

1.6 Title verse chorus – part two

All roads lead toward the chorus – Pat Pattison¹³³

The chorus is the lyricist's trump card. Rarely used in poems, unheard of in prose, it is the significant difference between lyric and other literary forms, and for that matter all other art forms. The chorus has the ability to free the lyric from narrative and create a freedom of expression “through patterns and relationships unrestricted by the shapes stories impose”.¹³⁴ The chorus's repetition and ability to absorb all manner of verse detail invites and rewards the listener throughout the passage of the song. The form itself has a power and a charm.

Bob Dylan's *Blind Willie McTell* is a case in point:

Verse: Seen the arrow on the door post
Saying, “This land is condemned”
All the way from New Orleans to Jerusalem
I travelled through East Texas

¹³¹ Davis, 9.

¹³² Hallberg, 185.

¹³³ Pattison, *Form and Structure*, 51.

¹³⁴ Culler, 5.

Where many martyrs fell

Chorus: And I know no one can sing the blues like Blind Willie McTell¹³⁵

The chorus line opens up opportunities of movement throughout the verse, sanctioned by the verse/chorus relationship. Dylan is not saying McTell is the best blues singer, but that he is distinctive,¹³⁶ thereby sanctioning the verse lines' similarly unique avenues of image, rich in possibility. The chorus line and the verse/chorus form promote variations in image, and the removal from narrative allows a rearranging of time and space, encouraging both surprise and inevitability to be a potential feature of lyric. Consequently, the opportunities for wide ranging content in the verse allow the repetitive impact of the chorus to be amplified.¹³⁷

A chorus with few words has the capacity to control an expansive area of lyrical ideas and elements. A chorus lyric with too much detail may limit the range of the verse, and therefore the verse lines' subsequent ability to amplify the chorus. Ideally the chorus lyric maximises the potential of its relationship to the surrounding lines and provides opportunity for a vast scope of subject matter, imagination and meaning.

The elements of line, rhyme and rhythm, sectioning, variation and repetition, title, verse and chorus are all integral to lyrical form. The line subsides, the rhyme connects, the rhythm disappears underground; the title maps out and attracts varying and repeating sections that in turn maximise the potential of each other and of the structure as a whole. A chorus line offers up a vast array of lyrical scope and richness of idea that when implemented assists the listener to participate. Understanding the elements of form and their combined capabilities enable the lyricist to put forward, enhance, support and sustain individual content.

¹³⁵ Bob Dylan, *Blind Willie McTell*, (Special Rider Music, 1983) accessed Oct 20, 2017, <https://www.bobdylan.com/songs/blind-willie-mctell/>

¹³⁶ Sean Willentz, *Bob Dylan in America* (New York: Random House, 2011), 203.

¹³⁷ Pattison, *Form and Structure*, 55.

Chapter 2 – Content

This chapter examines aspects of lyrical content, namely sound, image, sense, patterns, the personal and universal elements of lyric and the use of charms. Their various capabilities and their individual and combined potentialities are again established and analysed via their use in a variety of highly regarded songs. Amongst others, William Blake and RZA are used to highlight sound's attention-seeking memorability across a lyrical line. For image, the exegesis again examines *Strange Fruit* as well as *A Good Year for the Roses* by Jerry Chestnut and Bob Dylan's *Simple Twist of Fate*. For an analysis of both sense and patterns, Augie March's *One Crowded Hour* is utilised, for the personal/universal, the work of Sappho and Leonard Cohen, and for charm, William Shakespeare.

2.1 Sound

Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow...because 3 is lyric – Sammy Cahn¹³⁸

Beyond the sonic patterns composed by rhyme and rhythm, further euphonic methods can be employed to make a line beautiful and striking. Just as the musician has formulas or systems of musical theory of benefit to the musician, so too does the lyricist. The figures of speech are an egalitarian series of lyrical formulas utilised for thousands of years since their initial development in Ancient Greece. They employ a myriad of devices designed to empower the speaker/singer to win over and persuade the audience via a balance of elements that mark the lyric as musical, meaningful and memorable. They provide the lyricist opportunities to pattern and put forward their ideas compellingly and unforgettably, via repetition, alliteration, antithesis, diacope, enallage, personification, metaphor, simile and more.¹³⁹ The figures provide a rhythm, a balance, and a convincing flow across the line with words that feel welcomed on the tongue and therefore welcomed by the ear.¹⁴⁰

Advertisers use isocolons: “Have a break have a Kit Kat”,¹⁴¹ Shakespeare (and his audience) used tricolons:¹⁴² “Friends, Romans, Countrymen”.¹⁴³ There is synecdoche, when a part

¹³⁸ Sammy Cahn as cited by Zollo, *Songwriters on Songwriting* 4th ed. (Cambridge MA: Da Capo, 2003), 30.

¹³⁹ Mark Forsyth, *The Elements of Eloquence* (London UK: Icon Books Faber & Faber, 2013), 1-6.

¹⁴⁰ Robert von Hallberg, *Lyric Powers* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 179.

¹⁴¹ Forsyth, 101.

represents the whole (or vice versa), as in *Jerusalem* – “And did those feet in ancient times”.¹⁴⁴ Melodies are inclined to repeat, and so too the words wedded to those melodies,¹⁴⁵ and the more sonorous the line of lyric, the more it avails itself to repetition.

“To destroy the beauty from which one came”

“Maybe it’s hatred I spew, maybe it’s food for the spirit”

“The most benevolent king communicates through your dreams”¹⁴⁶

These are not lines from Shakespeare as one might imagine; rather, they are from Jay Z, Eminem and The Wu Tang Clan (RZA) respectively. These lyrics share with Shakespeare similar combinations of rhythm and imagery and the same attention seeking, sonic delight across the line. Each has balance, a first half that sets up a second half to reward and resonate. Sheila Davis discusses the sounds of words and their subtle ability to be deployed and bear powerful repetition¹⁴⁷ via anaphora, parallelism, word motifs (much like the repetition of a musical motif), assonance, the ring of the familiar, all of which she labels “verbal acrobatics”.¹⁴⁸ The chorus in particular can benefit from the figures as the sonority of the line creates memorability first time through. Striking and convincing due to its musicality, with repetition it then enchants the listener.¹⁴⁹ Knowledge of the figures enables the lyricist to understand why particular combinations of words move them, and in the process of analysing these combinations, assist their own lines to be similarly arranged to produce this “sonorous sensation”.¹⁵⁰

2.2 Image

Deep and dissolving verticals of light/Ferry the falls of moonshine down – Kenneth Slessor, *Five Bells*¹⁵¹

¹⁴² “Elizabethan London was crazy for rhetorical figures”. Forsyth, 2.

¹⁴³ Forsyth, 84.

¹⁴⁴ Forsyth, 150.

¹⁴⁵ Forsyth, 102.

¹⁴⁶ Akala, “Hip-Hop & Shakespeare?” Songs referenced in order: *You Must Love Me* by Jay Z, *Renegade* by Eminem and *Impossible* by Wu-Tang Clan. (TEDx Aldeburgh. Published Dec 7, 2011), accessed June 21 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DSbtkLA3GrY&vl=en>

¹⁴⁷ Sheila Davis, *The Craft of Lyric Writing* (Cincinnati: Ohio: Writer’s Digest Books, 1985), 141.

¹⁴⁸ Davis, 164.

¹⁴⁹ Hallberg, 163,169.

¹⁵⁰ Hallberg, 162.

¹⁵¹ Accessed June 10, 2016, <https://www.poemhunter.com/poem/five-bells/>.

Aaron Copland described sonorous images as having beauty, warmth, depth, and a balance with other tones.¹⁵² Lyrical images can be seen to have similar properties. At play are their patterns; the unexpected image, the resonating image, the image with warmth, depth, and edge, and the impact of each image upon the next.¹⁵³ In *Strange Fruit*, we witness a transfer in the use of the senses to release the images: the sight of “poplar” in the first verse, continued by “pastoral/bulging/twisted” in the second, to the use of the sense of smell with “sweet and fresh” onto “burning flesh”. The words “gather” and “rot” now have an extra dimension to them, inducing images that expand and linger, they allow the words “suck” and “drop” to not only contribute to the sound of the lyric, but to provide a further (judgmental) dimension. The patterned release of image strong-arms the listener and enables the rolling movement of metaphor to carry the emotion throughout.

Dominic Pedler writes of The Beatles: “A common feature that so many of the songs share at pivotal moments is that of conjuring imagery of lyrical movement with complimentary harmonic movement.”¹⁵⁴ In many cases the lyrical movement is in the title itself: *Here, There and Everywhere, Across the Universe, The Long and Winding Road*.¹⁵⁵ Sound and image are at their best when in unison, collectively enhancing and concealing their arrangements simultaneously. In *The King of Tears* Malcolm Gladwell highlights the use of the image as a location or setting, or as an emotional trigger, that when piled on top of another in sharp detail, make the story all the more palpable.¹⁵⁶ The specificity of the information, the accumulation and compression of the particulars, and the organisation of release is what enriches the lyric.¹⁵⁷

I can hardly bear the sight of lipstick
On the cigarettes there in the ashtray
Lying cold the way you left them
At least your lips caressed them

¹⁵² Aaron Copland, *Music and Imagination* (New York: Harvard University Press, 1959), 32.

¹⁵³ Brian Boyd, *Why Lyrics Last: Evolution, Cognition and Shakespeare's Sonnets* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), 19-20.

¹⁵⁴ Dominic Pedler, *The Songwriting Secrets of The Beatles* (London UK: Music Sales Limited, 2003), 638.

¹⁵⁵ Pedler, 639.

¹⁵⁶ Malcolm Gladwell, *The King of Tears*, accessed July 11, 2017, <http://revisionisthistory.com/episodes/16-the-king-of-tears>.

¹⁵⁷ Richard F Thomas, *Why Dylan Matters*. (London, UK: Harper Collins, 2017), 233.

While you packed¹⁵⁸

The specificity dresses the set, places the action, and guides the audience line by line.

“Images are words that suggest physical sensation”¹⁵⁹ where the particular leads to a sensory experience, a connection leads to an emotion, that leads to a relationship with the lyric, or as T.S Eliot coined it, “the objective correlative”¹⁶⁰ – a sequence of events that escort the emotions. This sharp focus directs attention and assists the music’s enhancement of the image.¹⁶¹ Dylan credits his painting teacher Norman Raeben with teaching him how to “put my mind and my hand and my eye together...”¹⁶² The subsequent album *Blood On The Tracks* over-flowed with vividness and vibrancy:

A saxophone someplace far off played
As she was walkin’ by the arcade
As the light bust through a beat-up shade where he was waking’ up
She dropped a coin into the cup of a blind man at the gate
And forgot about a simple twist of fate¹⁶³

It was the fundamental power of the image that attracted Dylan to the form in the first place:

Folk songs were the way I explored the universe, they were pictures and the pictures were worth more than anything I could say. I knew the inner substance of the thing. I could easily connect with the pictures.¹⁶⁴

It is the combination of sound and image that connects us to song. The image leads to imagination, the first time through or upon further inspection. G.K. Hunter notes that the listener supplies “from his imagination a complete dramatic situation”.¹⁶⁵ The visual cortex desires to be activated; the singer’s images of experiences and emotions readily solicit our

¹⁵⁸ Jerry Chestnut, *A Good Year For The Roses* (Jerry Chestnut Music Inc/Sony/ATV music publishing, 1970), accessed June 11 2017, <https://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/georgejones/agoodyearfortheroses.html>

¹⁵⁹ Davis, 154.

¹⁶⁰ T. S Eliot as cited in Davis, 155.

¹⁶¹ Davis, 107.

¹⁶² Dylan as cited in Thomas, 33.

¹⁶³ Bob Dylan, *Simple Twist Of Fate* (Ram's Horn Music, 1974; renewed 2002 by Ram’s Horn Music) accessed Oct 2, 2017, <https://www.bobdylan.com/songs/simple-twist-fate/>

¹⁶⁴ Bob Dylan, *Chronicles Volume One* (New York: Simon & Shuster, 2004), 18.

¹⁶⁵ G.K. Hunter as cited in Boyd, 160/161.

own.¹⁶⁶ The release of detail invokes the listener's own detail to follow, to where the specificity of the detail and the timing of release push us further emotionally.¹⁶⁷

2.3 Sound, image and sense

The particulars need a reason, otherwise they are merely a list of particulars. – Sheila Davis¹⁶⁸

But for one crowded hour you were the only one in the room
And I sailed around all those bumps in the night to your beacon in the gloom
I thought I had found my golden September in the middle of that purple June
But one crowded hour would lead to my wreck and ruin¹⁶⁹

A chorus presented as a coherent sequence of images, in tow with captivating sonority, allows for a transformation of awareness to succeed, and to land forcefully.¹⁷⁰ Utilising the capabilities of rhyme and rhythm to push detail forward, it establishes an authority of character and tone; the outcome will not be questioned, the listener is convinced – it all makes sense.

But for one crowded hour you were the only one in the room

The line is balanced and rich in potential, revolving around number (one), space (crowded) and time (hour), which enables configurations of image, sound and sense to range across the entire chorus. Musically the word “one” lands on the first beat of the bar, the strongest beat in the bar, which makes sense, as it presents a strong, unequivocal statement.¹⁷¹

And I sailed around all those bumps in the night to your beacon in the gloom

¹⁶⁶ Boyd, 45.

¹⁶⁷ Gladwell, accessed July 11, 2017, <http://revisionisthistory.com/episodes/16-the-king-of-tears>.

¹⁶⁸ Sheila Davis, *The Craft of Lyric Writing* (Cincinnati: Ohio: Writer's Digest Books, 1985), 109.

¹⁶⁹ Glenn Richards, Augie March. *One Crowded Hour. Moo, You Bloody Choir* (Sony BMG Music Entertainment, 8287678559, Australia, 2006), accessed Oct 8, 2016. <https://augiemarch.com.au/moo-you-bloody-choir-lyrics/>

¹⁷⁰ Hallberg, 16.

¹⁷¹ Pat Pattison, accessed May 4, 2016, <https://www.coursera.org/learn/songwriting-lyrics/lecture/3BtUo/phrasing>

For “gloom” to not appear as though it has been solely selected for the purpose of rhyme, the word must be empowered. Songwriter Glenn Richards does this by preceding “gloom” with various suitable images and sonic techniques that smooth the word’s journey and expedite its landing. For example, “your beacon” arrives from “sailed around” and “night”, there is the alliteration of “bumps” and “beacon”, and how “all those bumps in the night” allude to both the number “One”, and “the crowded...room”. The “beacon” leads the listener inevitably through the “gloom”.

I thought I had found my golden September in the middle of that purple June

“In the middle” harks back to being ‘in the midst’ of a crowded room. “I thought I had found” brings in complication, or lyrical discord, thereby awaiting resolution. For “June” to arrive, comparison is employed between the image of a “golden September” (the colour makes sense seasonally speaking) and “purple June” (again the colour is appropriate), allowing the image to enhance the sound, enriched further by the assonance of “purple June”. And finally, since June is a winter month, a ‘gloomy’ month, it too lands with an authority, with equal proportions of detail and sound.

But one crowded hour would lead to my wreck and ruin

“Wreck and ruin” arrives with a sense of inevitability. The complication of the previous line “I thought I had my found” leads us to the “But”. As the last phrase is where the lyric stops moving, “wreck and ruin” is perfectly positioned. The “One crowded hour” has inescapably led to “wreck and ruin”, to where the ship has run aground, as we sensed it would.

Sense is not relevant to rhyme but, when a stanza comes together strikingly, with a sense of surprise and inevitability, sense seems to be brought along by chimes of sound.¹⁷²

It is the combination of sound, image and sense that deliver an idea strikingly. The sound and image variation provides “triggers for repetition”¹⁷³ that lead to a desire to return to a

¹⁷² Hallberg, 165.

previously heard section, and to where each section contributes to the next. This sustains the lyric as a whole whilst contributing to the overall shape of the lyric, and to the persuasive patterns at play. Image and sound empower the words around them; image and sound via complication and tension lead to resolution, image and sound via comparison and contrast enhances believability.

2.4 Patterns

We all have a predilection for patterns...and the most important pattern...will be the emotions. – Brian Boyd¹⁷⁴

Verbal play does not stop in childhood, as we do not lose our sensitivity to, or our love of, play with verbal patterning.¹⁷⁵ We are programmed to predict by identifying patterns and so to subvert the prediction delivers a sense of novelty,¹⁷⁶ and by occupying an anticipated form, patterns present themselves in a way that best transmits the information. Patterns are tried and trusted, and as such a quick flick along any radio dial will enable the listener to “distinguish, from the cadences alone, the sermon, the prayer, the commercial, and the newscast”.¹⁷⁷ These cadences draw attention to the importance and influence of the form’s shape; as Aristotle put forward, “Every work of art...must carry within itself a demonstration of the reason why its shape is what it is and not otherwise”.¹⁷⁸

When not tied to narrative, lyricists are provided an untold freedom that can paradoxically “...paralyse choice”.¹⁷⁹ For that reason, this paralysis is often alleviated by the parameters of verse/chorus/bridge that allow the lyric to “embody a tension between the highly exploratory and the highly conventional”.¹⁸⁰ Much like the title that maps out the story, patterns contain clues for the listener regarding outcome, and when the listener is aware of what the pattern signifies, they provide further opportunity for images, sounds and ideas to present finer

¹⁷³ Hallberg, 161.

¹⁷⁴ Boyd, 45, 166.

¹⁷⁵ Boyd, 12, 13.

¹⁷⁶ “The brain evolved to predict and it does so by identifying patterns”. Carey as cited in Boyd, 10

¹⁷⁷ Northrop Frye, *Sound and Poetry: Edited with an Introduction by Northrop Frye* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1957), xxv.

¹⁷⁸ Aristotle as cited in Paul Fussell, *Poetic Meter and Poetic Form* (New York: Random House Publishing 1978), 98.

¹⁷⁹ Boyd, 31-32.

¹⁸⁰ Boyd, 32.

textures, and be appreciated more immediately. The lyricist is able to present idiosyncratic perspectives of idea, image and sound due to this inbuilt patterned provision of information and instruction. As Louis MacNeice said, “the shape is half the meaning”.¹⁸¹ The patterns of *Strange Fruit* and *50 Ways to Leave Your Lover* influence their outcomes, and the bearing of the elements within, yet the framework also offers freedom.

With the bridge of *One Crowded Hour*, a new ‘in-house’ pattern appears. As Jimmy Webb explains, “The bridge enables us to expand the song form due to its salient property of cleansing the musical palette”.¹⁸² Lyrically the bridge takes advantage by presenting a new idea; to do otherwise would not fulfil the possibilities that new patterns provide.

O but the green eyed harpy of the salt land
She takes into hers, my hand
She says, “Boy, I know you're lying...
O but then so am I!” and to this I said, “O well”¹⁸³

The second line of the bridge provides an inversion to normal word order for the sake of rhyme. The novelty of this (as we know the author knows how to rhyme *not* for the sake of it) adds to the memorability of the section.¹⁸⁴ The image, alliteration (“harpy”, “hers”, “hand”) and the lack of rhyme in the final two lines combine to complicate and contrast the bridge with other sections. The bridge transports opportunity for different perspectives to aid the elucidation and impact of new ideas, and enhance the depth of meaning overall.

Patterns provide a freedom for the lyricist to place within them images of the visual imagination, and rhymes and rhythms of the aural imagination. They build towards a sense of arrival, one of inevitability or of surprise. The in-built information that patterning provides allows the lyricist opportunity to reveal the idiosyncratic idea and the individual thought.

¹⁸¹ Fussell, 126.

¹⁸² Jimmy Webb, *Tunesmith: Inside the Art of Songwriting* (New York: Hyperion, 1998), 116.

¹⁸³ Accessed Oct 8, 2016, <https://augiemarch.com.au/moo-you-bloody-choir-lyrics/>

¹⁸⁴ Novelty can come from “...prediction errors”. Boyd, 21-22.

2.5 Personal universal

Among the pleasures of great art is our sense of contact with individual artistic minds –

Brian Boyd¹⁸⁵

One attraction to art is the contact between singer and listener, with a private thought expressed to embolden the listener's own individuality and originality.¹⁸⁶ The tension between the private thought and the public utterance authenticates the release of imaginative detail. With the immediacy of access to the singer's thoughts, this detail becomes a convincing and compelling catalyst for the listener's own.¹⁸⁷ The individual experience, the abandonment of anonymity, leads to the delivery of specific, rich, and significant insights; the personal thought manifested universally. As an example of the individual thought made public, here is a fragment from the Ancient Greek lyricist Sappho:¹⁸⁸

He is more than a hero
he is a god in my eyes –
the man who is allowed
to sit beside you – he
who listens intimately
to the sweet murmur of
your voice, the enticing
laughter that makes my own
heart beat fast. If I meet
you suddenly, I can't
speak – my tongue is broken;
a thin flame runs under
my skin; seeing nothing,
hearing only my own ears
drumming, I drip with sweat;
trembling shakes my body

¹⁸⁵ Boyd, 50.

¹⁸⁶ Boyd, 50.

¹⁸⁷ Boyd, 6.

¹⁸⁸ Sappho, Greek poet (610-570BCE), accessed Sep, 2014, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Sappho-Greek-poet>

and I turn paler than
dry grass. At such times
death isn't far from me¹⁸⁹

This colloquial, singular, sense bound foresight and rhetorical ingenuity combines to produce a “peculiar epiphany of beauty and wisdom”¹⁹⁰ as the listener is captivated by the release of Sappho’s own detail and her fearlessness of expression.

A related transition toward the personal/universal mode of expression occurred in the early twentieth century as a new style of writing replaced the previous, traditional ballad form of sung stories intended for large audiences. The inventions of the microphone, phonograph and radio brought about a self-enclosed style of writing directed towards the audience of the private listener, attuned to the singer.¹⁹¹ A personal yet universal communication addressed an audience of one, designed for delivery by the “self-absorbed, plaintive singer”¹⁹² via concentrated textures, internal rhymes and repetitions – nuanced, sophisticated, intimate, and attached to the catch phrases of the day. The writers borrowed from the ideas of 1920s poets such as T.S. Eliot and W.C. Williams, to generate song titles such as *How Long Has This Been Going On?*, *Don’t Get Around Much Anymore*, *I Don’t Stand a Ghost of a Chance*;¹⁹³ lines of everyday speech that invited form to match content, and mapped out character, tone and musical movement.

There were chills up my spine,
And some thrills I can't define.
Listen, sweet, I repeat:
How long has this been going on?¹⁹⁴

¹⁸⁹ Sappho, *He Is More Than A Hero*, accessed Sep 4, 2015, <https://allpoetry.com/He-is-more-than-a-hero>

¹⁹⁰ W. R. Johnson, *The Idea of Lyric: Lyric Modes in Ancient and Modern Poetry* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 75.

¹⁹¹ Philip Furia, *The Poets of Tin Pan Alley: A History of America's Great Lyricists* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 58.

¹⁹² Furia, 58.

¹⁹³ Furia, 11-12.

¹⁹⁴ George and Ira Gershwin, *How Long Has This Been Going On?* (New World Music Company (Ltd), 1927), accessed Oct 4, 2016, <https://genius.com/George-gershwin-how-long-has-this-been-going-on-lyrics>

It is the union of lyric and music that further heightens the relationship between the personal and the universal. Johnson writes of what is known of the relationship between Ancient Greek lyric and music, “[M]usic intensified the words that the poet and his audience shared; it did not substitute for them or suborn them as decoration”.¹⁹⁵ With the etymological origin of lyric being from lyre, the bond of lyric and music generates an intensity – the Troubadours knew that uniting lyric and music creates “a language of the emotions”¹⁹⁶ as it “presents thoughts and feeling as an integrated whole, something that other art forms can accomplish only fleetingly”.¹⁹⁷ The relationship creates a further feeling of authenticity and authority as it organises and intensifies the personal and prepares it to be universally experienced. Leonard Cohen noted: “Your most particular answer will be your most universal”.¹⁹⁸ The personal detail, authenticated by the relationship between lyric and music, creates an amplified intimacy with the listener no matter where he or she is, in the arena or alone at home.

I haven't said a word since you've been gone
 That any liar couldn't say as well
 I just can't believe the static coming on
 You were my ground, my safe and sound
 You were my aerial¹⁹⁹

Sappho and Leonard Cohen show us how the individual can take advantage of the public space of performance to deliver the personal expression that connects performer to audience, rather than placing one above the other.²⁰⁰ The insight into the personal inner thought is legitimised, strengthened and maintained by its connection to music; the shared intimacy between lyricist and listener, the private made confidentially public, is personal and direct. There are countless possibilities in the organisations of sound and image, rhythm and rhyme, but a particular arrangement of the release of personal detail leads to a particular individuality.

¹⁹⁵ Johnson, 28.

¹⁹⁶ Peter Saint-Andre, “The Individualism of the Poet-Musician”, accessed Sep 5, 2017, <http://stpeter.im/writings/rand/troubadour.html> -

¹⁹⁷ Saint-Andre, accessed Sep 5, 2017, <http://stpeter.im/writings/rand/troubadour.html>

¹⁹⁸ Zollo, 331.

¹⁹⁹ Leonard Cohen, *Treaty*, (Sony ATV Music Publishing, 2016), *You Want It Darker*, accessed June 9, 2018, <https://genius.com/Leonard-cohen-treaty-lyrics>

²⁰⁰ Ben Ratliff, *Every Song Ever* (London UK: Penguin Random House, 2017), 65.

2.6 Charms

In Charms...the power of the words lies far more in their sounds than in their literal significance – Andrew Welsh²⁰¹

Derived not from meaning but from sound and rhythm, and concerned “not with vision but with power,”²⁰² charms grow out of the internal rhythms of the words themselves.²⁰³ They command an attention that is felt rather than figured, and seemingly not a part of rational thought.²⁰⁴ Added to the strengths of previously examined elements, these deep-seated roots of language provide further ingredients for the lyricist’s ‘charmed pot’.

(Shakespeare, *Macbeth*: Act IV scene 1)

First Witch:

Round about the cauldron go;

In the poison’d entrails throw.

Toad, that under cold stone

Days and nights has thirty-one

Swelter’d venom sleeping got,

Boil thou first i’ th’ charmed pot.

All:

Double, double toil and trouble;

Fire burn, and cauldron bubble²⁰⁵

The Latin word *Carmen*, generally meaning song or poem, in older Latin texts also meant an incantation or magic formula.²⁰⁶ The hook-laden chorus of the witches with its “thick, internal repetition of sound”²⁰⁷ is designed to create a spell upon the listener²⁰⁸ as the lyrical rhythms

²⁰¹ Andrew Welsh, *Roots of Lyric: Primitive Poetry and Modern Poetics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978), 150.

²⁰² Welsh, 155.

²⁰³ Welsh, 135.

²⁰⁴ Welsh, 161.

²⁰⁵ William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*: Act IV scene 1, accessed Sep 11, 2017, http://nfs.sparknotes.com/macbeth/page_130.html

²⁰⁶ Welsh, 134.

²⁰⁷ Jonathan D. Culler, *Theory of the Lyric* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), 139.

combine and deepen charm's powers.²⁰⁹ The regular patterns of strong rhythmic, repetitive movement gives us the social rituals of skip-rope rhyme, the game songs of children, work songs, field songs, chants at football games or protest marches²¹⁰ – all of which include a further charm ingredient – the “participation mystique of the communal voice”.²¹¹ The chorus collectively sung invigorates the participants, and subsequently impacts more profoundly due to that participation.

Primitive charms in practice are repeated over and over, notably not dependent on rhyme but on rhythm, on insistent sound patterns.²¹² Andrew Welsh discusses the repetition of four South Australian Aboriginal words to highlight charm's ‘general feeling of power’.²¹³ “Kandanga daruararungu managga gilbanga” (Star: falling: at night time: you [star] go back) is used to charm a falling star (evil spirit) “back to where it belongs”.²¹⁴ The English verb ‘call’ means both ‘to name’ and ‘to summon’²¹⁵ and provides another perspective on the varied roots of charm. William Blake would name a bright terror “Tyger Tyger burning bright”, and Shelley would address the wind “O Wild West Wind, thou breath of autumn's being”. This triangular address, addressing the listener via something or someone else is “a crucial aspect of the ritualistic dimension of lyric”,²¹⁶ where attributing human feeling to inanimate objects aids the impact of the line, sanctioning a sacredness and authority, a feeling of influence. The less ordinary the addressee, the more powerful the event can be,²¹⁷ as in Paul Simon's “Hello darkness my old friend/I've come to talk to you again”.²¹⁸

The lyricist is

²⁰⁸ Welsh, 148.

²⁰⁹ Welsh, 196.

²¹⁰ Welsh, 175.

²¹¹ Welsh, 187.

²¹² Welsh, 147.

²¹³ “The magic of names is an old root in poetry that derives from the charm and concern with power. Primitive cultures and the anthropologists who study them, must pay careful attention to the use or avoidance of names by members of a society, and this general feeling for the power, and the danger, of names appears particularly in the language of a society's charms”. Welsh, 158.

²¹⁴ Welsh, 137.

²¹⁵ Welsh, 161.

²¹⁶ Culler, 186.

²¹⁷ Culler, 188.

²¹⁸ Paul Simon, *The Sound of Silence*, accessed Sep 10, 2017, <https://www.paulsimon.com/track/the-sound-of-silence-8/>

...addressing things that could not hear in an attempt to give us a world that is perhaps not more intelligible but more in tune with the passionate feelings, benign, hostile, and ecstatic, that life has inspired.²¹⁹

The auditory imagination already relishing in the recurring external rhythms of song is ripe for people and place names.²²⁰ When John Lennon sings, “Half of what I say is meaningless, but I say it just to reach you Julia”²²¹ the naming lands the comment with a greater force than it otherwise would.²²² Naming reveals more than it conceals, as “to name is to have known, and to know is to have seen”,²²³ thus creating a space for the listener to enter and inhabit. Jimmy Webb writes, “Galveston, oh Galveston, I am so afraid of dying”;²²⁴ the address itself creates an authority via the naming-known-seen process and also creates space (rather than reducing it)²²⁵ for the listener to enter, to bring their detail, their fears, and their version of Galveston. Randy Newman’s “Louisiana, Louisiana, they’re trying to wash us away, they’re trying to wash us away”²²⁶ is again an unclear image, but the naming provides a frame for the listener to paint their versions within, of what they know, have seen, and are hearing now.

Furthermore, love songs are at root a charm aimed at casting a spell to not only pull “the beloved irresistibly toward the lover”,²²⁷ but also participate in the entire range of love song, be it longing, regret, adoration or despair.²²⁸ We are unable to resist this spell of subject, sound and rhythm, for we are dealing with what Baudelaire called the “*sorcellerie evocatoire*” (evocative sorcery), or the enchantment always at work in lyric.²²⁹ We are hardwired to fall prey to their powers and the correct combinations will be able to work their magic as

...the imperative rituals of flirtation, courtship and mate selection that are required to guarantee the perpetuation of the species and the maintenance of social order – that

²¹⁹ Culler, 242.

²²⁰ Welsh, 189.

²²¹ Lennon/McCartney, *Julia*, accessed Sep 10, 2017, <https://www.thebeatles.com/song/julia>

²²² Ratliff, 57.

²²³ Welsh, 158.

²²⁴ Jimmy Webb, *Galveston*, accessed Sep 10, 2017, <https://www.jimmywebb.com/lyrics/>

²²⁵ Welsh, 44.

²²⁶ Randy Newman, *Louisiana*, accessed Sep 10, 2017. <http://www.randynewman.com/albums/good-old-boys/>

²²⁷ Welsh, 242.

²²⁸ Culler, 207.

²²⁹ Culler, 173-4.

are hardwired in mammals and socially prescribed in traditional cultures – are up for grabs in mercantile democracies.²³⁰

The incantation qualifies all surrounding lyric and moves the lyric as a whole towards its own time and perspective.²³¹ Ariel's song from *The Tempest* takes the witches' rhythms in Macbeth further, with alliteration, assonance, rhyme, and with subtle variations and repetitions. The sound patterns at play here "generate deeper, far more elusive rhythms and a magic that is truly something rich and strange".²³²

Full fathom five thy father lies;
Of his bones are coral made;
Those are pearls that were his eyes:
Nothing of him that doth fade,
But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange.
Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell:
Ding-dong.
Hark! now I hear them – Ding-dong, bell²³³

Charms employ subtle, complex, internal and external combinations of rhythm, external combinations of sound, and the use of naming and calling, leading to a patterning that is highly seductive.²³⁴ Charms are rhythms and sound patterns that transport work and play songs across generations, and the use of charms creates space and the power to address passion, and to seduce via the love songs we must have.

The best combinations of form and content enable songs to enchant. The elements of form supply parameters and opportunities for the elements of content to flourish and resonate. Sonority delivers lines available for repetition; the image draws in further detail, and their powerful tapestry-like combinations deliver authenticated inevitability and/or surprise.

²³⁰ Dave Hickey, *Air Guitar: Essays on Art & Democracy*. (Los Angeles: Art Issues Press, 1997), 16.

²³¹ Howell D. Chickering, Jr, *Introduction to Beowulf* (New York: Anchor Books, Random House, 2006), 14.

²³² Culler, 156.

²³³ William Shakespeare, *The Tempest Act I, Scene 2*, accessed Sep 11, 2017, http://nfs.sparknotes.com/tempest/page_48.html

²³⁴ Culler, 134.

Patterns provide the listener with an understanding of the intention of the song, and when required, those patterns can be broken – to add surprise, to subvert predictability and attract attention. The lyric allows distinctive intimacy to be personally delivered and universally acknowledged. The lyric can incorporate the rhythmic charm that we are hardwired to receive, the naming that knows, and the address of the fundamental love song.

Chapter 3 – Craft

This chapter presents elements of craft that bond the elements of form and content to further enhance the lyricist's individuality, whilst concealing his or her involvement. To examine these capabilities of craft, this chapter revisits previously referenced works and utilises additional lyrics including Irving Berlin's *How Deep is the Ocean?*, Hank Williams' *Cold Cold Heart* and Kelly/Kavanagh's *On Raglan Road*.

3.1 Content is form

Every work of art...must carry within itself a demonstration of the reason why its shape is what it is and not otherwise – Paul Fussell²³⁵

Content is form, and form is content.²³⁶ Form informs tone, character, the release of detail and use of repetition to enhance persuasiveness and believability. When best crafted, content finds its best form, and form its best content. The song can be regarded as a shape shifter, changing its form to best suit content. Whilst many poetic verse forms serve a particular occasion, the popularity and public role of song, much like that of the elegy, has led to it not having any “required pattern”.²³⁷ Nonetheless, form can contain sections that carry meaning, understanding and opportunity within, “co-authored by its community”.²³⁸ For example, *Strange Fruit*'s AAA ‘strophic’²³⁹ form is a fixed, unflinching form appropriate for certainty of idea, tone and a constant unwavering intention. The interlocking verse/chorus sections at play and work in *50 Ways to Leave Your Lover* is the form that best delivers the variation and movement of lyrical tone and characterisation required. In *Richard Cory* the verse/chorus form invites return from the final chorus that has a seismic effect upon the content. *Blind Willie McTell* allows verse detail to feed a chorus that in turn supports a wide variety of further verse detail. Oscar Hammerstein wrote of the fine balance between craft, form and content: “An artist who is too fond of freedom is likely to obscure his expression. One who is

²³⁵ Paul Fussell, *Poetic Meter and Poetic Form* (New York: Random House, 1978), 98.

²³⁶ “Content Dictates Form” Stephen Sondheim, *Finishing the Hat: Collected Lyrics (1954-1981) with Attendant Comments, Principles, Heresies, Grudges, Whines and Anecdotes* (New York: Knopf, 2010), xv.

²³⁷ Eavan Boland and Mark Strand, *The Making of a Poem – A Norton Anthology of Poetic Forms* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2001), 167.

²³⁸ Boland and Strand, 167.

²³⁹ “Using the same music for successive stanzas”, Merriam-Webster Dictionary, accessed Jan 30, 2018, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/strophic>

too much a slave to form is likely to cripple his substance”.²⁴⁰ In the process of realising the idea, the lyricist determines the form to best house, carry and project the content, cognisant of parameters that help guide the content toward a distinctive result.

English songwriter Jarvis Cocker noted: “Lyric + Music + Audience = Dynamite”,²⁴¹ and as such, consideration of the intended audience can also guide the progression of form and content, via the use of craft. W.R. Johnston writes of how the beginnings, development and divulgences of lyric writing from the Ancient Greeks onwards have been shaped by the presence of an audience – an audience (not to be pandered to but) utilised by the writer to focus on what is being said, why and for whom.²⁴² The performance, the sense of occasion, the situation and the purpose are inseparable.²⁴³ A balance of content and form determines what needs to be varied and repeated to establish the exact character and tone for the particular occasion.²⁴⁴ Imagined or real, live in an arena or huddled around the lounge room radio, the audience plays a vital role in the writer determining and crafting the best use of form and content. The lyric is aided by the perceived presence of the listener, to realise an authority and purpose of delivery.

Naturally, different melodic forms request and require an appropriate lyrical content. The less melodic movement there is, the more scope to cover distinctive lyrical ground. For example, the restrained melodic movement of *Blind Willie McTell* allows a natural freedom of expression that is neither overtly happy, nor sad, and can therefore incorporate the inventiveness afforded by the chorus, to where hypothetically “every section has a different twist”.²⁴⁵ Alternatively, the more the melody moves, the less room for movement of subject matter (the excitable voice delivers excitable news), and the less opportunity for twists and turns; yet the more the melody moves, the more opportunity to highlight lyrically what the melody is ‘saying’. According to Robert von Hallberg, Johnny Mercer’s strength was to write to the music, to sense what the music is describing, and enhance the melody and rhythm.²⁴⁶

²⁴⁰ “Oscar Hammerstein II on Songwriting”. Posted on July 17, 2014 by Alexander Massey, accessed May 4, 2016, <http://oxfordsongwriting.com/oscar-hammerstein-ii-on-songwriting/>

²⁴¹ Rachel, 431.

²⁴² W. R. Johnson, *The Idea of Lyric: Lyric Modes in Ancient and Modern Poetry* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 31.

²⁴³ Johnson, 48.

²⁴⁴ Johnson, 31.

²⁴⁵ Paul Zollo, *Songwriters on Songwriting* 4th Ed. (Cambridge MA: Da Capo, 2003), 35.

²⁴⁶ Robert von Hallberg, *Lyric Powers* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 147.

The answer to your song is in your song. What are the melody and the rhythm saying? The lyricist's task is to add to the music's inherent implication, as the composer's job is to add to the meaning of the lyric. The lyricist works towards the most natural sounding formation of words that suit the existing music, be it The Beatles' *Yesterday*²⁴⁷ or Nirvana's *Smells Like Teen Spirit*, the craft is in hiding the craft.²⁴⁸ Sheila Davis puts it best when she writes, "It takes a lot of craftsmanship on the part of the lyricist to make it appear as though the composer wrote it all".²⁴⁹

The good storyteller knows how and when to release their information to the audience, to understand that the organisation of words, images and sound – the details pertaining to the eye and ear, can carry meaning and memorability.²⁵⁰ According to Paul Zollo, the more perfect the order of the release and repetition of certain information, the greater the song.²⁵¹ That is, the more perfect the crafting of the relationship between form and content, the greater the song. Overall, the lyricist reinforces and enhances what the melody and rhythm are attempting to portray, enhancing excitement or joy, enriching the sadness, or taking advantage of the reserved melody to explore and integrate impulses of conversational speech, or intimacy. To do otherwise would be unnatural, and a mismatch of content and form.

3.2 Parameters

I discovered Bacharach and David seemed to have this shape – not a verse or a chorus – which I called the Vorus. – Andy Partridge (XTC)²⁵²

At the turn of the twentieth century, the invention of 78rpm records meant the maximum length of the song was set at 4 minutes.²⁵³ Time and space were now at a premium, as was the artistry and innovation required to take advantage of the possibilities of these shorter

²⁴⁷ "Paul McCartney made the perfect marriage when he placed *YES-ter-day*, squarely on his melodic *Dum-da-da*". Davis, 249.

²⁴⁸ Keith Negus and Pete Astor, "Songwriters and song lyrics: architecture, ambiguity and repetition" (*Popular Music* (2015) Volume 34/2. © Cambridge University Press, 2015), 232.

²⁴⁹ Davis, 243.

²⁵⁰ Andrew Welsh, *Roots of Lyric: Primitive Poetry and Modern Poetics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978), 81.

²⁵¹ "It seems that much of the greatness of songs is that they are perfectly ordered". Zollo, 105.

²⁵² Daniel Rachel, *Isle Of Noises* (London UK: Picador, 2013), 219.

²⁵³ Ben Yagoda, *The B-Side The Death of Tin Pan Alley and the Rebirth of the Great American Song* (New York: Riverhead Books, 2015), 3.

parameters. The craft applied by Tin Pan Alley writers within this tight formal structure is still applicable today as the modern pop song is generally of a similar duration.²⁵⁴ Jimmy Webb observes that “every word and note counts”²⁵⁵ and suggests songwriters are “the Swiss watchmakers of music and literature”.²⁵⁶ On average, songs 3-4 minutes long contain 3-4 verses, each with 3-4 lines, therefore the lyricist has approximately 12-16 lines in which to work. The effectiveness of the lyric is determined by its use of the finite space. Every word or at the very least every line is on double duty, performing at least two roles simultaneously – contributing to sense whilst containing sonority, and/or the vivid image, and/or sing-ability – thus contributing to meaning whilst providing memorability. The parameters also demand that the lyricist leaves room for the music and rhythm to enhance and develop the lyric and vice versa. For example, the ‘lyrical silence’ at the end of a line allows the listener to ruminate on and imbibe the lyric whilst the music augments it. The craft ties the lyric, music and rhythm together to further the impact of the song in the limited space available.

Webb also observes that the selection of ‘interesting’ words leads to unique rhymes, that lead to unique lines, that lead “to an original perspective that makes the song stand out from the rest”.²⁵⁷ The rhyme and line can lead to the idea, yet no matter the sequence of events in its genesis, the process ultimately serves to hide the machinations behind the idea. The listener is attuned to the original detail, the interesting idea, the original perspective, oblivious to the craft involved. The lyricist hides their virtuosity so the “listener is seldom aware of the lyricist’s presence”.²⁵⁸ The craft is far from mind as the rhyme, the tightness of line and rhythm, the images and the weighted chorus take hold in this excerpt from Irving Berlin’s *How Deep is the Ocean?*

How much do I love you?
I'll tell you no lie
How deep is the ocean?
How high is the sky?

²⁵⁴ Yagoda, 3.

²⁵⁵ Jimmy Webb, *Tunesmith: Inside the Art of Songwriting* (New York: Hyperion, 1998), 37.

²⁵⁶ Webb, 38.

²⁵⁷ Webb, 57.

²⁵⁸ Sondheim, 222.

How far would I travel
To be where you are?
How far is the journey
From here to a star?

And if I ever lost you
How much would I cry?
How deep is the ocean?
How high is the sky?²⁵⁹

The limited space leads to the craft revealing the art. Abstraction, metaphor, ambiguity, directness, complication, simplification and comparison are all involved in the process of delivering individual detail in an original way.²⁶⁰ Stephen Sondheim, when writing *Send In The Clowns*, realised that “the wounded would express themselves simply”,²⁶¹ as such presenting an example of the lyricist’s process being one of distilling a series of “sensory, sensual, and perceptual observations ... to an essence”.²⁶² The lyricist utilises the parameters available to better develop meaning and memorability. Revision leads to vision. The relationships between form, content and craft enable the lyric and music to heighten and complete each other.

3.3 Detail

The easier the song is to sing – the more work involved. – Oscar Hammerstein²⁶³

Sing-ability is the ease with which words can be sung. It leads to participation, and when the audience participates, meaning and memorability are super-charged.²⁶⁴ Like the detail that

²⁵⁹ Irving Berlin, *How Deep is the Ocean?* (Imagem US, LLC Universal Music, 1932), accessed Sep 11, 2017, <https://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/franksinatra/howdeepistheocean.html>

²⁶⁰ Brian Boyd, *Why Lyrics Last: Evolution, Cognition and Shakespeare’s Sonnets* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), 50.

²⁶¹ Sondheim cited in Davis, 243.

²⁶² Daniel J. Levitin, *The World in Six Songs* (New York: Penguin Group, 2008), 185.

²⁶³ “A song that requires little effort to sing or listen to is usually the result of great effort on the part of its creators.” “Oscar Hammerstein II on Songwriting”. Posted on July 17, 2014 by Alexander Massey, accessed May 4, 2016, <http://oxfordsongwriting.com/oscar-hammerstein-ii-on-songwriting/>

²⁶⁴ Welsh, 187.

invites further detail, sing-ability's charm seduces the listener further.²⁶⁵ Harlan Howard has observed the meticulousness of Hank Williams' craft via the song *Cold Cold Heart*. Howard notes that on the page the lyrics work, but "when sung they fly".²⁶⁶ Sing-ability is echoed by the previous generation of lyricists. Sammy Cahn held the view that the sing-ability of a song is the difference between lyric and poetry²⁶⁷ and for Hammerstein, "If a song is not sing-able, it is no song at all."²⁶⁸ Many of the most successful lyricists (Lorenz Hart, Ira Gershwin, Dorothy Fields) sang as they wrote, in order to test the sound, sense and sing-ability of the lyric.²⁶⁹ There is a precision required for sing-ability to emerge. Williams' process was also to sing the lyric over and over in the pursuit of the best delivery, whereby "the sounding of the consonants moved from the front to the back of the mouth so the vowels were always sing-able."²⁷⁰ Williams was shaping a lyric designed for the ear, aware that we are not songwriters, but song singers.

I try so hard my dear to say
 That you're my every dream
 Yet you're afraid each thing I do
 Is just some evil scheme
 Some mem'ry from your lonesome past
 Keeps us so far apart
 Why can't I free your doubtful mind
 And melt your cold, cold heart²⁷¹

Of note are the fifteen internal 'r' phonemes,²⁷² and how the lyric is connected from beginning to end. It not only sings, it hides its poeticism ("And melt your cold, cold heart")²⁷³ within the narrative, keeping its sadness in place throughout.

²⁶⁵ Welsh, 157.

²⁶⁶ Dave Hickey, "The Song in Country Music", accessed March 30, 2017, <http://www.tdpri.com/threads/the-song-in-country-music-on-hank-williams%E2%80%99-phrasing.179277/>

²⁶⁷ Cahn as cited by Zollo, 34.

²⁶⁸ "Oscar Hammerstein II on Song writing". Posted on July 17, 2014 by Alexander Massey, accessed May 4, 2016, <http://oxfordsongwriting.com/oscar-hammerstein-ii-on-songwriting/>

²⁶⁹ Davis, 248.

²⁷⁰ Hickey, accessed March 30, 2017.

²⁷¹ Hank Williams, *Cold Cold Heart* (Acuff Rose Music/Song ATC Music Publishing, 1950), accessed June 9, 2017, <https://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/hankwilliams/coldcoldheart.html>

²⁷² Hickey, accessed March 30, 2017.

²⁷³ Hickey, accessed March 30, 2017.

Further examples divulge the subtle detail employed by the lyricist. Pat Pattison's analysis of Randy Newman's *Feels Like Home* notes the craft involved in supporting varying emotions with varying rhyme types. In the first pre-chorus Newman rhymes "long/done", with the casual "sonic resemblance"²⁷⁴ reinforcing the uncertainty of the situation. In the second pre-chorus, again in lines two and four, Newman rhymes "touch/much", a perfect rhyme that addresses the certainty now at hand. The use of varying rhyme types has supported the change in sentiment.²⁷⁵ The sound draws in the listener; the rhyme connects lines and ideas, but also provides the motion to the emotion. In Irving Berlin's *Blue Skies* – "Nothing but blue skies/Nothing but blue birds/Never saw the sun/Never saw things"²⁷⁶ – the word blue becomes 'blue' (referring to melancholy or sadness), as Berlin crafts a lyric that refutes the cheerfulness it seems to assert, via the prevalence of negative terms.²⁷⁷ The song operates on different levels, as the true purpose and meaning of the negative terms may not be realised initially, but when discovered add significant consequence to the song. Stephen Booth points out the use of the subliminal in song via the nursery rhyme: "One for the money, Two for the show, Three to get ready, And four to go", as the mixing of numbers via the prepositions in each line – one four, two four, three two, four two – is a part of the attraction, and produces a charm-like hold on the listener.²⁷⁸ Then there is Paul McCartney's unwavering refusal to change an established melody to accommodate lyrical syllabic variation, an attitude shared by Burt Bacharach.²⁷⁹ Hal David, Bacharach's main collaborator, showed his lyrical expertise in the sub-genre of song that Sheila Davis labels 'Emotional Counterpoint'. David approaches Bacharach's buoyant melodies with hard luck lyrics – *Raindrops Keep Falling on my Head*, *There Is Always Something There to Remind Me*, *I'll Never Fall in Love Again*. The combination delivers an internal/subconscious message for the listener to shrug off the tough times.²⁸⁰ We see and hear in these brief examples of detail what Hammerstein calls the

²⁷⁴ Pat Pattison, *The Essential Guide To Rhyming* (Boston MA: Berklee Press, 1991), 117.

²⁷⁵ Pattison, 117.

²⁷⁶ Irving Berlin, *Blue Skies* (Imagem U.S LLC Universal Music Publishing Group), accessed June 9, 2018, <https://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/ellafitzgerald/blueskies.html>

²⁷⁷ Philip Furia, *The Poets of Tin Pan Alley: A History of America's Great Lyricists* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 59.

²⁷⁸ Jonathan D. Culler, *Theory of the Lyric* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), 184-5

²⁷⁹ Elvis Costello, *Unfaithful Music and Disappearing Ink* (London UK: Viking Penguin Random House, 2015), 490.

²⁸⁰ Davis, 249.

“finickiness” that produces the polished piece.²⁸¹ The lyric that falls on the ear, seemingly untouched by human hand, does so due to the effort involved.

Frank Loesser once drew a picture of a train with a caboose and said to an aspiring writer:

This is what makes a good song. The locomotive has to start it. The caboose has to finish it off. Those are the bookends. Then you fill in different colours for the cars in the middle.²⁸²

These different colours are the detail: the images, sounds, patterns, sing-ability, subtle rhyme, and subliminal charms. All are linked and depending upon the idea, or chorus line, or melodies, the carriages are sometimes of a similar colour or sometimes of a wide variety. The lyricist uses detail to usher in other detail that is individually intriguing and collectively compelling.

3.4 Unity

Constructions of sufficient density and unity...call us back to them again and again. – Paul Fussel²⁸³

A unity of delivery strengthens the song’s individuality and progress: via the line that disappears, the rhyme that connects and the rhythm rooted underground; via the sectioning, variation and repetition that enable the verse and chorus to flower; via how sound and image are organised for sense to land with force, for patterns to shape meaning, for the personal to invoke the universal, and in the hidden magnetism of charm – this unity sanctions individuality of thought.

The instigation of this unity involves processes as individual as the end result. Paul Simon proposes that the opening line should have plenty of options to enable the writer to develop

²⁸¹ “Oscar Hammerstein II on Songwriting”. Posted on July 17, 2014 by Alexander Massey, accessed May 4, 2016, <http://oxfordsongwriting.com/oscar-hammerstein-ii-on-songwriting/>

²⁸² Yagoda, 157.

²⁸³ Paul Fussel, *Poetic Meter and Poetic Form* (New York: Random House, 1978), 98.

the idea of the song throughout its formation.²⁸⁴ In the lyric writing process the Bee Gees would often use one-word titles (such as *Heartbreaker*, *Words*, *Guilty* and *Tragedy*) that, as Robin Gibb noted, would not give too much away, yet draw the listener in.²⁸⁵ The lyricist wants space for as many ideas as possible to come into play in the writing process. Once the song is in motion, past, present, future, point of view, experience and imagination, lyric, melody and rhythm – all are available to be merged in the process of writing a song. A system of expectation and reward is established,²⁸⁶ able to last the duration of the song if all techniques work cohesively to enrich the central idea. Leonard Cohen proposes that the earlier the particulars of lyric and music are brought together in the writing process, the better the organisation – “They’re born together, they struggle together, and they can influence one another”.²⁸⁷ The individuality of the artist can appear in these moments as they ‘flash’ within and across the line, for example, in *One of Us Cannot be Wrong* Cohen writes: “And then I confess that I tortured the dress that you wore for the world to look through”.²⁸⁸ These flares appear due to form, content, and the musical architecture stimulating each other. The musical line influences the lyrical line’s internal rhyme, and its personal, universal admission. Dominic Pedler notes that “the unexpected is of itself no virtue but all great works seem to contain it”.²⁸⁹ The variable song form itself contains distinctive opportunity for the unforeseen to appear.

With the lyrical elements all heading in the same direction, the resultant unity leads to a confidence in performance. The artist is able to enhance and perform the nuances, the emotion or the detachment, to best communicate all that is intrinsic to the song. Van Morrison’s performance of the Kavanagh/Kelly song *On Raglan Road* contains vocal repetitions, not contained in the original poem, that serve to amplify the emotion. The detailed images induce our own, and the charm of naming places the emotion and carries a richer font of understanding. Furthermore, Peter Mills points out that the potency of the unity

²⁸⁴ Zollo, 99.

²⁸⁵ Daniel Rachel, *Isle Of Noises* (London UK: Picador, 2013), 47.

²⁸⁶ Ben Ratliff, *Every Song Ever* (London UK: Penguin Random House, 2017), 230.

²⁸⁷ Zollo, 333.

²⁸⁸ Leonard Cohen *One Of Us Cannot Be Wrong*, accessed Sep 3, 2018, <https://genius.com/Leonard-cohen-one-of-us-cannot-be-wrong-lyrics>

²⁸⁹ Dominic Pedler, *The Songwriting Secrets of The Beatles* (London UK: Music Sales Limited, 2003), 667.

of words and music in this song is due to the “pure word, pure sound and the explosions of the sung word between them”.²⁹⁰

On Raglan Road, on a golden autumn day,
I saw her first, and knew
That her dark hair would weave a snare
That I might one day rue
I saw the danger, yet I walked
Along the enchanted way
And I said let grief be a falling leaf
At the dawning of the day²⁹¹

As Ben Ratliff writes, “In art, the confident gesture, loud or quiet, is of the highest importance.”²⁹² There is the inner substance of the lyric and the outer voice of the delivery. Cahn called it instincts, salesmanship and sing-ability.²⁹³ Unity attracts attention and establishes an authority that leads the listener, via the performance, past the performer to delight in the significance, depth and individuality of the lyric. When everything heads in the same direction, their combined forces deliver a balance and incorporation of ideas, craft and oneself.

3.5 The concealment of craft

It doesn't really matter where a song comes from. It just matters where it takes you. – Bob Dylan²⁹⁴

Craft must be hidden, as its job is not to announce itself upon the song but to support the overriding idea and serve feeling.²⁹⁵ Craft ensures that lyric, melody, harmony and rhythm all

²⁹⁰ Peter Mills, “Into the Mystic: the aural poetry of Van Morrison”, *Popular Music* (1994), Volume 13/1 (Cambridge University Press, 1994), accessed on 01 May 2017, University of Tasmania Library, <https://www.cambridge.org/core>, 96

²⁹¹ Patrick Kavanagh, *On Raglan Road* (1946, Music adapted from *Fáinne geal an lae*, Thomas Connellan), accessed May 10, 2017, <https://www.poemhunter.com/poem/on-raglan-road/>

²⁹² Ratliff, 61.

²⁹³ Zollo, 34.

²⁹⁴ Bob Dylan as cited in Richard F Thomas, *Why Dylan Matters* (London, UK: Harper Collins, 2017), 297.

²⁹⁵ Sondheim, xxvi.

carry equal importance and collectively support and magnify each other. The creative method of taking from further afield, across all the arts, across different genres and times, is a vital part of the craft, and of its concealment. To seek out as many influences and ideas as possible heightens the prospects of the individuality of the artist. Bob Dylan heightened his own art by indulging in a vast array of the melodies, lyrics and rhythms of old folk songs, developing a mastery of their language, the specifics of sound and image, rhyme and rhythm.²⁹⁶

You internalize it. You sing it in the ragtime blues, work songs, Georgia sea shanties, Appalachian ballads and cowboy songs. You hear all the finer points and you learn the details.²⁹⁷

With his recording career still in its infancy, Dylan's discovery of the poet Arthur Rimbaud added another influence from (relatively) far afield that led directly to some of his earliest masterpieces – *Mr. Tambourine Man*, *A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall* and *Chimes of Freedom*²⁹⁸ – which all incorporated Rimbaud's "vivid, dreamlike images and disarrangements of the senses".²⁹⁹ For Dylan, it was all merely another part of the folk tradition, "taking what you need from wherever you find it and using it to create new art."³⁰⁰ Neither stealing nor plagiarism, Richard Thomas labels it intertextuality: the "creative reuse of existing images, texts or sound",³⁰¹ where the writer takes from many distant sources for the individuality of the song (and artist) to emerge. Indeed Dylan's *Tryin' to Get to Heaven* borrows and modifies lyrics from ten other songs and poems to produce a song "whose elements speak from their own original contexts, while at the same time becoming integral and vital parts of the new song".³⁰² The more the lyricist absorbs across the ages, across genres, across other art forms, the more individual will be the work, and the more the craft will be concealed.

Commitments to craft result in the ability to consistently and compellingly deliver ideas in their paramount form. Sheila Davis notes, "Sometimes an idea takes over that vetoes all the

²⁹⁶ Thomas, 313.

²⁹⁷ Bob Dylan, as cited in Thomas, 313.

²⁹⁸ Thomas, 154.

²⁹⁹ Thomas, 154.

³⁰⁰ Thomas, 178.

³⁰¹ Thomas, 132.

³⁰² Thomas, 168.

‘rules’³⁰³. The Beatles absorbed every available musical influence, from classical to hymns, to Tin Pan Alley onwards, and learnt to utilise the potency of each form when required.³⁰⁴ T.S. Eliot noted, “A good poet will usually borrow from authors remote in time, or alien in language, or diverse in interest”.³⁰⁵ The use of a number of varied sources is upheld by W.B. Yeats: “[T]he more various and numerous the elements that have flowed into perfection, the more powerful will be the emotion”.³⁰⁶ The process brings out the distinctiveness of the lyricist, and ensures uniqueness, as no other artist will make that “particular formation in exactly that way”.³⁰⁷ It is the process of taking dissimilar colours, sounds, forms, moods and texts to create something manifestly new. Intertextuality aids the individuality of the artist. Dylan defines the essence of songwriting as “[e]xperience, observation, and imagination”³⁰⁸ – three features of craft that stem from an intense study of the craft itself and an ability to source and combine other art forms to propel ideas along; to borrow from afar to reinforce individuality. Borrow from another artist and you will sound like that artist, borrow from a hundred and you will sound like you.

The Old English term for a poet was ‘a maker’,³⁰⁹ someone whose job was to shape words, or tie words together, not due to inspiration, but as a part of their role to find one word “bound truly to another”.³¹⁰ Words create lines bound truly to another, and when the lyricist writes verses and choruses bound truly to one another, a compelling authority presents itself via sight and sound. Words, lines and ideas widely sourced and individually crafted can become persuasive enough to become a part of the way we look at things.³¹¹ If we think again about *Strange Fruit*, were it not for such a powerful lyric would we truly feel the breadth and depth of what took place? Would we be so aware of the lingering emotion? Has it not influenced the way we look at things? The listener is at the base of the tree; the song is making us look.

Craft determines how far and how compellingly a song can travel. It involves ascertaining and implementing the best form for the best content, and vice versa. Form is informed by

³⁰³ Davis, 248.

³⁰⁴ Yagoda, 223.

³⁰⁵ T.S. Eliot, “Philip Massinger”, 1920 cited in Thomas, 193.

³⁰⁶ W. B. Yeats, *Writers on Writing: Poetry and Symbolism* (London, UK: Phoenix House, 1958), 106.

³⁰⁷ Aaron Copland, *Music and Imagination* (New York: Harvard University Press, 1959), 51.

³⁰⁸ Thomas, 65.

³⁰⁹ Howell D. Chickering, JR, *Introduction to Beowulf* (New York: Anchor Books, Random House, 2006), 4.

³¹⁰ Chickering, 4.

³¹¹ Alexander McCall Smith, *What W.H. Auden Can Do For You* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013), 21.

content, until the developed idea demands a variation in form, and vice versa. The more adept the writer is in applying the most appropriate aspects of craft to facilitate these demands, the further the idea will carry, the longer the song will resonate. There are a myriad of individual processes, and at its best the individuality of craft determines the extent of the individuality of the artist. As far as Dylan is concerned, “It’s called songwriting... You make everything yours.”³¹² The craft involves determining the best shape for the idea, defining patterns of variation and repetition, details of sound and image, who is singing to whom and why, controlling character, tone, and more. The lyricist utilises their craft to remain unseen and unheard in this process, to reveal their art, and to disclose and enhance their individuality.

³¹² Dylan as cited in Thomas, 174.

Chapter 4 – Own Songs

Twenty-one lyrical elements are presented in the previous three chapters: the line, rhyme, rhythm, sectioning, variation, repetition and the title, verse and chorus elements of form; the sound, image, sense, patterning, the personal and universal, and charm elements of content; and the craft elements of reciprocated relationships between content and form, the optimum use of parameters, the employment of components of detail, the overall unity of the lyric, and the concealment of craft itself. Chapter 4 involves a lyrical analysis of four of the folio's songs via these elements and a briefer analysis of the lyrical elements in the remaining sixteen songs contained in the folio. The chapter highlights the rich representation that is required from the major elements in each of the three previous chapters – form, content, and craft – for the enhancement of the individuality of lyric. The four songs are chosen as a demonstration of various utilisations of the elements.

4.1 Song 1: *Innocence Lost is Never Regained*

In the love letters that you find
In the thoughts that never crossed your mind
In the pent up low pressured air
In the grey receding hair

The opening line is the most important line in the song, setting tone and character and initiating patterns of variation and repetition to follow. Combined with melody, the opening line “In the love letters that you find” sets the (uneasy) tone that the next line confirms via perfect rhyme and consistent rhythm. The repeat of line, rhyme and rhythm in the second couplet further acts as a sonic reinforcer of the song's intention. As the structure becomes recognisable the listener is able to compartmentalise that information to one side. The unifying composition of line does not showcase itself; rather, it holds the detail in place. Rhyme connects lines, ideas and delivers resolution. The steady rhythmic pulse in the verse allows other features to flourish. As line, rhyme and rhythm collectively withdraw, the images they hold stimulate the listener to provide their own pictorial account of the events, thus becoming a part of the process.

The combinations of variation and repetition produce sections that permit the listener faster access to the song's intention. The overall mood of the song is in motion. The verse feeds the chorus, and the chorus meaning deepens with all that precedes and follows. Each verse line is an illustration of the title *Innocence Lost is Never Regained*. The line, lifted from John Milton,³¹³ dictates the entire thread of the lyric, mapping out what is to be sung. Once aware of the song's direction, the listener can concentrate further on the particulars provided and their relationships to each other, and is thus more attuned to the arc of the lyric and able to savour the sonic and visual components more readily. Both the rhyme at line's end and the repetitive "In the" at the beginning of each line (anaphora) accentuate the connections between the images, and create an authority of delivery.

In the hurt that hurt people deliver
In the deserted house down by the river
In the lines around the eyes
In the tunnel of lies

You hear no bell
You see no train
Innocence lost is never regained

Image leads to imagination, and the variation in the use of comparative and contrasting images furthers their rightful place in the lyric, from the specific "In the grey receding hair" to the ambiguous "In the thoughts that never crossed your mind", from lines that paint the scene – "In the deserted house down by the river" – to lines that encapsulate the situation and draw the lyric forward – "In the tunnel of lies". The verse leads inexorably to the chorus – "You hear no bell/You see no train/Innocence lost is never regained". Sense has arrived with sound and image.

In the moments you used to treasure
In the sky that once went on forever
In the darkness without a sound
I up and left town

³¹³ John Milton, *Paradise Lost*

You hear no bell
You see no train
Innocence lost is never regained

The third verse follows a similar path, the first two lines again alluding to innocence lost, the next two lead to the chorus with “In the darkness without a sound/ I up and left town”. This last line of verse contains multiple attention seeking devices. It breaks the anaphora of “In the”, it uses a deliberate grammatical error (enallage) to change point of view, and its vernacular conceals its part in setting up the subsequent “You hear no bell/You see no train”. The intimacy in each line summons the listener to the same level as the singer, granting access to the singer’s thoughts. With detail dealt out confidentially, the craft further disappears, and the singer/song/listener relationship strengthens.

The union with music heightens and intensifies emotional language, as the rhythm and melody provide movement and meaning that the words enrich. The musical tension created by an Eb note over an A major chord in bar six of each verse leads to the lyrical resolution in the last phrase of the final verse, the perfect place to present high drama as the spotlight focuses on a line that significantly impacts on the entire lyric. The title *Innocence Lost is Never Regained* directs the action. In the first verse – love letters, unknown thoughts, a build-up of tension, and an ageing person. In the second – a ruthless exchange, a house and life abandoned, and the stress caused by their situation. The third verse contains a brief recollection of better times before the escape, silently in the dead of night. Such is the power of sound and image and of the relationship between verse and chorus, that this is compressed into 12 lines of verse and three lines of chorus. The narrative is not expressed in a linear path but concentrated via its interaction with the repeated summary line. The title provides opportunity for this distillation process, with content supported by melody, harmony, rhythm and the form itself, to enrich meaning. All aspects of craft are commandeered to steer the lyric in the same direction, toward the title. The form provides parameters of expression and expectation yet also a freedom that allows the anticipated to be delivered in an unexpected manner.

4.2 Song 2: *When I Was On The Moon*

When I was on the moon the earth hung high
Time would slow when you'd slip by
And gather 'round the globe
Twist itself until
We could kiss and time stand still

The title, chosen due to its attention seeking virtues, only appears at the top of the song, but instigates a pattern that guides the listener throughout the song. Again the opening line sets in motion sections of repetition and variation whilst establishing the tone and character of the lyric. As “High” is sung low, the lowest note in the song, it further colours character. Via alliteration – “hung/high/slow/slip/gather/globe”, assonance – “Twist itself until”, and a comparison of time’s capabilities – “slow, slip, gather, twist” – sense lands with chimes of sound and image in tow, to where the verse itself does “stand still”. Here content and form are crafted together to echo each other. To specify stillness at line’s end also provides contemplation on the lyric, a musical reinforcement of the idea, and an anticipation of further detail.

When I was on the seas the seas were high
With waves as black as black as the sky
I'd raise a tattered sail
Hold the wheel with all my will
For when we kiss time stands still

With the repetition of “seas” and “black”, plus the rhyme of “high” (sung low again) and “sky”, scenes are painted sonically via repeated patterns of line, rhyme and rhythm. There is alliteration “when/with/waves/wheel/will”, and the comparison of “raise a tattered sail” with “hold the wheel with all my will” allows the word “will” to set up and land “time stands still”. Again the aural delights are supported by the firmly established and therefore receding structure. The association between the journey and the stillness of time also permits “time stands still” its rightful position. Furthermore, the last line activates the end and beginnings of words in order to slow the line down appropriately. As the tongue wraps its way around the arrangement of the letters, from the front of the mouth with the “s” of “kiss”, to the top of the

mouth to pronounce the “t” of “time”, then back to the front of the mouth to combine both movements with the “st” of “stands” and “still”, the line slows itself, allowing the delivery to mirror the message.

When I was on the land the land did shake
The wind did blast the boughs did break
I’d cross a crooked mile
Climb a broken hill
For when we kiss time stands still

The anaphora of “When I was on” continues the authority of each verse. The third verse upholds the patterns of repetition with “land” and “did” and alliteration with “blast/boughs/break/broken/cross/crooked/climb/kiss”. The last line arrives naturally due to the work undertaken to expedite its landing. There is the comparison of “cross a crooked mile” with “climb a broken hill”, and as “shake” leads to “break” which leads to “broken” which is attached to “hill” that rhymes with “still” sound and sense guide the content to conceal the craft.

And now I’m in your arms and the earth rests
The seas are calm and I’ll do my level best
To silence your alarms
Fill you full of daffodils
For when we kiss time stands still

A musical interlude (a repeat of the introductory pattern) facilitates the last part of the lyric’s journey; from moon, seas, and land to the arms of the beloved. The interlude informs the listener of some lyrical movement afoot, confirmed by the removal of the recurring “When I was”. With “And now I’m in your arms” the tension is resolved. Further details combine – the musical rest before the word “rests”, the use of “level best”, a common phrase like “crooked mile”, which preserves the natural shape of language whilst supplying rhyme. And “level” contributes to the overall sense of the verse as a whole, as “rest/calm/level/silence” all lead to “still”. There is the wordplay of “silence” and “alarms”. The final flourish comes with “Fill you full of daffodils”, where alliteration, rhyme, and image combine to land the line and extend tone and character.

The patterns of line, rhyme and rhythm are upheld throughout, providing aural pleasure, asserting authority, delivering resolution, and allowing evocative images to become fully realised. The wide parameters set by the opening line grant the writer scope to pursue all aspects of variation and repetition, contrast and comparison, complication and simplification. The narrator operates along a consistent line of sound to highlight a uniqueness and doggedness, to arrive inevitably and compellingly. The lyric travels with fluidity, hiding the strategies of invitation and reward, and transporting the intimacy that invokes the hardwired charm of love songs.

4.3 Song 3: *Kathleen*

At times the dead seem more alive than I
I see them shoot across the sky
And in the faces of passers by
Kathleen

The static eight bar F#m introduction produces a sense of anticipation before the attention seeking opening line sets in motion the character and tone of the lyric. The consistent length, rhyme and rhythm of the first three lines in each verse create a momentum that enhances the power of the fourth line. The uniform structure draws the listener toward the relationship between the narrator and Kathleen, as an intimacy is established and authorised via the intensity of detail and the naming/knowing/seeing process of the sung word “Kathleen”. The alliteration (seem/see/sky) and the loose, internal rhyme (faces/passers) support musicality and movement. The balance between melodic repetition and harmonic variation contributes to both the natural, conversational tone and the unfolding drama across each verse.

To know the measurements of each mistake
How cities crumble poets drown in lakes
A few more drinks and I’ll no longer shake
Kathleen

In verse two, the stable structure again allows the lyric to display detail. The lines are in threes, and the ideas in threes also: measuring mistakes/crumbling cities/poets drown in lakes. The disparate statements are unified by the positioning of the line “a few more drinks

and I'll no longer shake", and the ideas, though varied and disjointed, are connected due to the repetition of line, rhyme and rhythm.

Bring me the chandelier
Bring me the golden years
Bring me the head of Alfredo Garcia
Bring me to the point of tears

The bridge variation is used to highlight and heighten further emotional properties, as this different musical section demands a new perspective. The anaphora of "Bring me" adds weight to each of the demands, from the specific "chandelier" to the obscure "golden years", from the bizarre movie reference of the third line³¹⁴ to the clichéd last line. The entire bridge combines to add character. Craft is further utilised to hide the presence of the lyricist; the more common words are used to provide the rhymes ("years, tears"), the obscure third line is partnered with a variation in musical content, and finally the "Bring me to the point of tears" occupies its rightful last line position. Another eight bar instrumental section follows, which continues the mood of the lyric and carries it forward. The spell continues with content and form delivered as one.

I watched you dance along the western shore
In silk and satin all the spoils of war
You remind the men of what they're fighting for
Kathleen

The alliteration (watched/western/war/what/silk/satin/spoils) in the verses continues. The charm of rhyme, in tow with image, helps to land the ideas with sense, and conceal craft. The "western shore", with its military-like description (the Western Front), helps set up the second line, as the dance of "silk and satin" sets up the third, with the connecting sounds connecting ideas. The invitation/reward process allows further detail (the overall battle fatigue of the narrator, for example) to emerge with subsequent listens, the listener invited back by the mix of lyrical, musical, rhythmical and harmonic hooks. The instrumental section

³¹⁴ Sam Peckinpah and Gordon Dawson, *Bring Me The Head of Alfredo Garcia*. Directed by Sam Peckinpah (Mexico: Optimus Films, 1974).

again carries the lyric forward, allowing the dance to continue and for the lyrical lines to linger.

No it doesn't have to end like this

No it doesn't have to end like this

Such is its flexibility that a song's form and content can demand variation in each other to enable its charm to continue. *Kathleen* contains not one but two bridges deemed to best serve the content whilst providing the variation its musicality demands. The repetition of lyric and melody aided by the variation in harmony enhances believability. The two bridges in *Kathleen* also utilise their musical differences to add another layer to the overall lyric. They provide a link from the beginning of the song, the opening line's adynaton – "At times the dead seem more alive than I" – via the authority of the anaphora "Bring me..." in the first bridge, and the repeated lines of the second bridge – "No it wasn't meant to end like this" – that forecast the final verse's rhyming antithesis (conceal/reveal), to land the last grave image.

In conversation we conceal

What our silences will reveal

You push your fork around your favourite meal

Kathleen

Kathleen

Kathleen

The lyric aims to conceal its elements by utilising as many as possible. In *Kathleen* each verse combines the connecting powers of rhyme, the image and the magic of three (tricolon). Overall, the sectioning, the interplay of content and form, of variation and repetition, and the charmed naming of Kathleen create the crafted individual voice that can deliver sustained believability and an intimacy of delivery. The whispered ending aims to capitalise on the patterns at play, of the personal, the universal, the charm. The lyric is crafted to be sung, for the lyricist to disappear into the song, into the appropriate structure, the vehicle required – for the singer.

4.4 Song 4: *The Last Polaroid*

In *The Last Polaroid* the lack of rhyme and rhythm and irregular line length combine to house the hazy content. With the basic building blocks askew, this lack of conformity at a structural level influences and enhances the uncertainty.

May ghost ships sail into your empty wine bottles
May you know what to do when the time comes
May you know when to use your white flag
May you know where the pier ends
May you not be left hanging like bad art in a motel room
May you wander along the river Esk

The opening line instigates the ambiguity that is at the core of *The Last Polaroid*. From thereon the verse's images – “ghost ships/empty wine bottles/your white flag/pier ends/bad art in a motel room/the river Esk” – lose their sharpness, as the inconsistent line length is a distraction, not allowing them to flourish. The small melodic variation sanctions the lyric to deliver all manner of advice, with the inherent melodic rhythm of “mo-tel-room” and the melodic possibility of the word “wa-a-ander” being utilised. However, the general ambiguity is intentionally supported via a lack of rhyme. Rhyme aids recall and memorability, structure and meaning, and influences the overall sense of the idea, and in *The Last Polaroid* the lack of rhyme, of connections in sound, leads to a lack of connection in sense and authority. With the lyric not sung on the downbeat, lines beginning on the weaker beats of the bar accentuate the ambiguity. Thus the anaphora (the repeated use of “May”) loses its persuasiveness, the metaphor (“May ghost ships sail into your empty wine bottles”), and the simile (“May you not be left hanging like bad art in a motel room”) only add to the uncertainty.

Ruth
So the story ends
Beneath a forgotten cross
During climate extremes

The introduction of “Ruth” commences the naming-knowing-seeing-authority process, and with the ensuing repetition of the title, the lyric starts to solidify. A focus develops as the various images are finally brought together into the one frame.

With the last Polaroid
With the last Polaroid
With the last Polaroid
With the last Polaroid
With the last Polaroid

The delayed entry of the chorus serves to highlight what a chorus can bring to song. A chorus can free a lyric from narrative, and validate a freedom of expression. Its ability to absorb verse detail can add invitation and reward for the listener throughout the song. Its absence starves the listener of a possibly more fulfilling song trajectory, as a more recognisable pattern is not produced. The chorus doesn’t re-appear to gain further emotional depth. Its delayed introduction lessens the opportunity for the chorus to widen the scope of subject matter. The chorus finally invites us to ponder whether each of the images presented earlier were in fact last Polaroids. The chorus then sets in motion a frantic instrumental section, launched by the five (not an even four) title repetitions. At song’s end, the return of the opening lines reinforces the overall lyrical and musical journey.

May ghost ships sail into your empty wine bottles
May you know what to do when the time comes

For the lyric to compellingly invite the listener’s own version of the images presented, the lyric aims to utilise, enhance and reflect the motion and space that music provides, for each to capitalise on the potential of the other, otherwise the craft will appear. Metaphor, simile, anaphora, ambiguity, directness, variation and repetition are all involved in the process of delivering a lyric in an individual way. In *The Last Polaroid* the linear trajectory is maintained via the lack of rhyme and consistent line length to keep the listener guessing until the finale. The images presented, the naming process and the title repetition are all lyrical elements deemed to best suit the overall idea of the song when released in this sequence, to make the most of the potential of the idea, and its accompanying musical elements.

4.5 Album 1: *The Last Polaroid*, 2017

The Last Polaroid was written for drums, bass, guitars, keyboards and voices – parameters that shaped the lyrical and musical elements from inception. These songs were written to utilise the musicians at hand, with widescreen images and tall tales to be told by lyric, melody, harmony and rhythm. In the early writing process the inner critic is not allowed in the rehearsal room,³¹⁵ yet over time the distillation process takes place, using all the elements of craft, content and form to forge the individual work.

1. *The Last Polaroid**
2. *Cartwheels*
3. *Everyone Loves Me*
4. *Kathleen*^{*316}
5. *Barkly Square*
6. *Walking On Air*
7. *High Above The River*
8. *No Electronic Devices*
9. *Yea Tho Grief...*
10. *Winter Ball*³¹⁷

Similarly to the opening song *The Last Polaroid*, the closing song *Winter Ball* contains imperfect rhyme types and schemes and a variable line length that also lead to an ambiguity of emotion. Joy and sadness sit side-by-side, aided by structure. In *Winter Ball* the title draws the information towards a single point, but the detail appears grainy due to variable line length, and with little rhythm and rhyme in attendance. As the delivery suits the detail, the vocal lines rarely begin on the strongest beat of the bar, the downbeat.³¹⁸ The ambiguity of idea ranges across the entire song, from rhyme use to rhythm, to line to bar to beat. However, it is in the last verse, where the lyrical repetition and perfect rhyme, the musical rhythm and melody all combine to deliver the highest point of the song:

Shake it Shake it
Shake the tallest tree

³¹⁵ “Don’t let the critic become bigger than the creator...don’t let it strangle you”. Randy Newman cited in Paul Zollo, *Songwriters on Songwriting*, 4th ed. (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo, 2003), 274.

³¹⁶ These two asterisked songs are previously discussed in Chapters 4.3, 4.4.

³¹⁷ All songs Charles Jenkins/Control except *High Above The River*, Milne/Jenkins/Starr/Control 2016.

³¹⁸ Pat Pattison, accessed May 4, 2018. <https://www.coursera.org/learn/songwriting-lyrics/lecture/3BtUo/phrasing>

At times you get luckier than you would ever hope to be

There is no uncertainty in the big four pop songs on the album, *Cartwheels*, *No Electronic Devices*, *Walking On Air* and *Everyone Loves Me*. With constant line length, rhyme type and scheme, the patterns support the certainty of emotion in a unified fashion. All roads lead to the chorus, with the title of each song mapping out, revealing and propelling the in-built charm of the simple chorus and its ability to take on detail from different perspectives. The simple chorus in *Cartwheels* sanctions the verse's detail; be it the pronunciation of the letter Z (Zeee), or the personification of "The sad fountain, the bruising sky", all detail combines to colour a character that then empowers the song's performance. In *Walking On Air* the verse images are piled on from the outset to magnify the sentiment of an impending turnaround. Figures of speech abound including the metaphor of the title, the antithesis of "I've become the stay-at-home troubadour", and the anaphora in the bridge, "No no longer..." In uniform lines of three, the structure allows the past's detail to drip down in each verse before a shift (via line number, and mood) to the present tense of the pre-chorus and onto the flight of the chorus. In *No Electronic Devices*, again the simple chorus line – "Summer days/Summer nights" – allows various verse images to colour it. The overall lyric is sustained by the combination of chorus sing-ability and the title-line's presence throughout. Each line, rhyme type and scheme, each image and idea connects to the title, and the chorus. In *No Electronic Devices* the senses are at play as we see, hear, smell, touch and taste our way through the song. "Boot against ball", "Mother's dinner call" nestle under the chorus overview, whilst lines such as "No Electronic devices can entertain/Like laughing with your lover through the summer rain" speed up the action, with alliteration and the close proximity and connectivity of internal rhyme providing movement and authority to the statement. Finally, in *Everyone Loves Me* the title again opens up possibilities of verse detail that justify the title. The double duty of lyric is present with the "I got more" lines courting both additional information from the narrator, and further musical repetition from the chorus. The solid structural elements sustain the divulgements and questionable behaviour contained in each new verse. Collectively, the elements harness the potential and power that the title/chorus relationship provides, brought along by a form that contains, projects and subsequently amplifies the distinctive content.

Barkly Square, taking its cue from the 1939 song *A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square*, takes advantage of the tonal, conversational melody to project balanced lines of detail and

patterned euphony throughout: “The very fountain of desire the very fountain of delight/ Was she riding in and out of the shadows or in and out of the light?” Lines of constant length and number are devised for sections of sound, image and sense to enchant and drive the listener along the ‘rising roads’ towards the final intimacy in the song’s outro – “Two little boats you and me”. The 14th rule³¹⁹ also provides the authority of “To defy the dangers/Of the four chambers/Of the human heart”.³²⁰ The repeat of the final verse (with increased musical texture and rhythmic muscle) delivers the return of the title, and the subsequent movement into the second chorus; this re-appearance balances the elements of variation and repetition and provides a stability to support the idea.

In *Yea Tho Grief*... the authoritative powers of rhyme arrive via sound and comparison: “fruit” to “leaf” leads to “brief” from “hall” and “wall” in verse one. “Thunder” leads to “rain”, “Lover’s lane” arrives from “heat” and “raw defeat” in verse two. To push the images forward, each verse rigorously upholds these patterns of end and internal line rhyme. Further technique includes the isocolon – “I will damn it from the mountaintop and curse it beneath my breath”, metaphor – “I’ve danced with all the demons and the dragons have been slayed”, and the 14th rule across the entire bridge. The locations themselves present a pattern – a wall, a hall, Lover’s Lane, a bowl, the castle keep. Rhyme and detail, supported by structure, provide the aural pleasure and vibrant images that cultivate the movement from grief to pain, from sin to fear, before turning inevitably toward death.

In *High Above The River* the triangular address³²¹ seeks to create the believability of a “river” that “won’t deliver you back”. In tandem with the proximity of perfect rhyme “river” and “deliver” adds urgency to the statement. The singer’s imploring of the elements are driven not only by the song’s external rhythm and tempo, the rhyme at line’s end, and repetition at the beginning of the line, but also by the rolling, grouping patterns of subject matter: in the first verse – “Fair winds, moonlight, stars, oceans, emotions”; in the next verse – “Bells, a chorus, the heart, the radio, a note, a word”; before heading back to the elements – “The clouds, the thunder, the wind and rain”.

³¹⁹ Mark Forsyth, *The Elements of Eloquence* (London UK: Icon Books Faber & Faber, 2013), 137.

³²⁰ “there is nothing/In the Seven Seas as turbulent/As the four small chambers of the heart”. Peter Goldsworthy, “Thirteen Songs from the Libretto for The Batavia”, *This Goes With That (Poems – 1974-2001)*. (Great Britain: Leviathan, 2001), 91.

³²¹ Triangular address: “...address to the reader by means of address to something or someone else”. Jonathan D. Culler, *Theory of the Lyric* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), 187.

Throughout these ten songs the elements of content and form are merged via the elements of craft. Drawn from various sources, the characters present in *Cartwheels*, *Everyone Loves Me* and *Kathleen* are able to leave their mark on the listener due to the stable structures that support them. There are patterns of rhyme and address that allow *Yea Tho Grief...* and *High Above The River* to follow a natural, believable course. The structural uncertainty in *The Last Polaroid* and *Winter Ball* enhances their ideas. The details of sound and image in *Barkly Square*, *No Electronic Devices* and *Walking On Air* deliver those songs fittingly to their destinations. Content and form are linked via the time and effort taken to propel meaning and memorability, via the concealment of craft.

4.6 Album 2: *Nylon String Songs*, 2018

The *Nylon String Songs* album set out to craft the content and form of ten songs to be performed by lone guitar and vocal. The album aimed to take advantage of the sonic parameters to present songs suitable for such an environment. The minimal textures informed the writing. The *Nylon String Songs* are more in keeping with the primacy of quiet, natural speech, allowing a crafted intimacy and idiosyncrasy of content, reflected in the forms used, and enhanced by the delivery.

1. *Innocence Lost is Never Regained**
2. *When I Was On The Moon*^{*322}
3. *Tubby Spiderman in Old Madrid*
4. *The Sun is Always Drinking*
5. *I'll See You in the Stars Tonight*
6. *Beware the Gates of Heaven*
7. *A Wedding Waltz*
8. *Monday Nights at the Retreat Hotel*
9. *Don't You Know the Night?*
10. *Hastings*³²³

In *Tubby Spiderman in Old Madrid* the charm of naming presents tone and characterisation. Each verse lyric progressively paints newer meaning whilst broadening and expanding the repetitive chorus. The idiosyncratic image and detail supplied by the contemplative opening lines instigate further images to be upheld and developed within the set parameters and patterns. The naming of *Hastings* also creates a knowing, an authority, and leads to images

³²² These two asterisked songs are previously discussed in Chapters 4.1, 4.2.

³²³ All songs Charles Jenkins/Control 2017.

that entice the listener's imagination. The simple chorus attracts and approves verse lines from different perspectives. The repeated opening line informs character and provides an opportunity for the ensuing lines. The urgency of the tempo reinforces the urgency of tone – from the desperation of the repeated proposal, to the use of “baby”. For a line (“If it were wild then wild it would be in Hastings”) to be repeated four times, a musicality is required to bear repetition, and lyrically open enough to provide opportunity of development and interpretations to drip down throughout the entire lyric. The second and third verses impact upon the chorus – the final verse explains the opening line and the pleas of the singer throughout. The invitation has led to the reward.

The fisherman's wife knows what to feel when the sea does spin
The fisherman's wife knows how to deal with a world that stings
The fisherman's wife knows which knife cuts through thick and thin
The fisherman's wife knows what to do when the boat don't come in

Once the last chorus has been delivered, the song ends immediately, highlighting not only the imploring nature of the song, but how again form meets content; to repeat the guitar riff would give the form a more musical focus, rather than the combined forces of music and lyric heading toward resolution.

In *Monday Nights at the Retreat Hotel* naming and rhyme sanction the action and authenticate the detail provided. Once more the uneven three-line verse suggests unfinished movement and assists the central idea in proceeding naturally and gracefully towards an end. The issue of naming all seven days of the week (to uphold the pattern of the first three verses) is solved as a new melodic line in the bridge offers lyrical opportunity (“The rest of the week”), to compress the action and move the lyric forward. The fourth and final verse contains an even four lines, thereby forecasting resolution via form. The lyrical outro leads onto a musical one, and the form, deeply rooted in the listener's subconscious catalogue of how song shapes and cadences inform, is a charm in itself. The overall structure hides itself to provide the room for detail – “Separating colours and cottons naturally” in verse two, to the “Emotional baggage handlers” in verse three.

With *Beware the Gates of Heaven*, the attention-seeking instruction and image of the opening line opens up opportunity of intrigue and surprise. The repetition of “They got their jobs” is

utilised in the application of two different scenarios, both heading towards the repeated “wide blue yonder”. Again, repetition and variation combine to maximise the potential of the idea – aiding its passage the first time it goes by the ear, and the landing with each subsequent listen. The slow tempo and soft strumming is mirrored by the content, with two supposedly strong characters (St Peter and Superman) revealing an uncertainty that is supported structurally via long line length and lack of rhyme. The listener is then made aware of their future intentions with lines of close internal rhyme “drink/think/cape/escape” (and the syllepsis of “He took off his cape/He took the fire escape”) that lyrically act to hasten and confirm their commitment, across the same musical tempo.

In *Don't You Know the Night* each verse's detail flows from the title line situated at the beginning of the verse. “Swim” brings in “washed”, “sunken” and “spilled”. “Paints” leads to the detail of “laughter” at the “fountain” and “tie up your hair”. “At its best” leads “rest” onto a “slow caress”. The flow of images provides movement to each verse and an expansive tone to the title. The second line of each verse upholds its place with patterned instruction. The bridge again allows a new perspective, and the song naturally comes to rest after the disclosure of an aspect of the night (“Puts the darkest of days to rest/with a simple turn/with a slow caress”). It is an intimate conversation, supplied with an appropriate, natural conclusion.

With *The Sun is Always Drinking* the patterns of personification involved in the presentation of the sun, moon and earth authorises their presence. The long line length supports the musings of content, and the tone is further implemented via (rhyme and rhythm) sound. The simple chorus with its ability to take on and develop detail opens up verse possibilities and allows images to parade, and for characteristics given previously to the spheres, to further find a logical fit in the human form. The return of the opening verse (and its line of simile – “Lapping up the water like a thirsty lion”) creates a distilled sadness via its musical repetition. Once more, form impacts upon content, and meaning; the final return of the verse indicates that the patterns of behaviour will continue, round and round, mirroring the patterns between the sun, moon and earth.

The patterns of line number, length and rhythm in *I'll See You in the Stars Tonight* sanction an authority in conjunction with anaphora and metaphor – “All the world's an actor/all the world's a stage”, antithesis – “We find in the footnotes/What we lose on the page”, and end rhyme – “stage/page/stave”. The B section occurs instrumentally at beginning and end, but is

sung in the middle of the song, making the same piece of music act as an intro, outro and bridge. As such the bridge has a familiarity on first appearance, matched by easy-going words that when wedded to the notes maintain character, and therefore believability, whilst varying tone and content. To not repeat the (bridge) lyric at end further allows the detail of the third verse to linger in the spotlight, and for the form, and craft to enhance the content.

Finally, with *A Wedding Waltz* the musical line determines the lyrical line – the 3/4 time signature, tempo, chords and upward melody support the lyric, and vice versa. The closeness of internal rhyme urges the lyric along. Establishing and then upholding the patterns of line, rhyme and rhythm create a certainty of intention, and once more the simple, repeated chorus provides opportunity for depth of meaning and emotion to emerge. “Girl for girl, boy for boy/upon a dancing bay” provides both detail and ambiguity, eventually resolved with “clouds will roll away”, which also harks back to the appearance of the sun in the opening verse. The line, rhyme and rhythm hold the detail, a content of variation and repetition, balanced to highlight the desired emotional effects. The lyric, melody, harmony, rhythm and delivery are all arranged to collectively carry the event to the listener, and with the repetition of “Yes Yes Yes” at song’s end inviting participation from the listener, the final piece is in place.

Chapter 5 – Conclusion

For an artist seeking to deliver their idea distinctively and with maximum impact, an abundant representation of lyrical elements from each of the three groups – form, content, and craft – is essential. As the candidature progressed there was a recognised improvement in the ability to direct and express the individuality in each of the folio songs. The research defined the process, providing the resources to identify, organise and heighten the elements of content, form and craft required to produce the unified delivery and amplify the individual thought. The research disclosed the effort essential for the song to effortlessly fall on the ear, plus developed an understanding of the construction and release of the elements required for a confident delivery. The research revealed the deep-seated charm and power of the song form itself, and the potential to utilise its variations for individual content. The research strengthened the ability to recognise the appropriate arrangement of the elements that will then lead to their concealment, and enable the engagement and seduction that songs are capable of.

Line supports, rhyme connects, and rhythm transports to collectively create character and tone, sanction authority, and dispense meaning and memorability. Sections of variation and repetition organise detail, depth and a sonority that invites and rewards the listener. The title attracts attention and maps out the paths from the informative verse to the participatory chorus. Patterns of sound and image intensify sense, and convey the personal/universal in a charm-like fashion. Shapes inform consequence, allowing finer textures to present more immediately. The individual lyricist directs the sequence of events, and organises the distillation of emotion to propel the song. When elements are mismatched, it is a mere generic and predictable song, where the spell is broken, and the craft exposed. Just as lazy rhyming reveals itself, the same applies for the lazy use of the elements. When crafted to be working together, all in sync, the elements provide an attraction and authenticity, delivering a combined force that is hard to resist.

The song is an event, reproducing an event. We are song singers not songwriters, combining external melody, harmony and rhythms with the melodic rhythms of lyric that support and enhance each other. By breaking down the elements of form, content and craft into distinctive pieces, the research enabled the recognition of which pieces of the ‘song jigsaw’ were

missing, or which pieces needed to be reshaped. Once the pieces were in place their individual identities were concealed, hidden by what they had collectively produced. Time, effort, and craft revealed the art.

The song has a public persona, shaped by circumstance and community. The popularity of song has overtaken a mandatory adherence to any particular static form and supplied it with a suppleness to avoid rigidity. It is an adaptable form that can frame and control the elements within, present them in a unique fashion, and yet also provide patterns that hold meaning and instruction within its borders. The form itself exerts influence upon the content, yet also relinquishes control if the idea demands a variation in form, to add new layers of detail, to add depth to its repeated elements, and to best serve the idea from a distinctive angle. These relationships allow the writer to determine the best way to express the event and its properties, to best carry the lyricist's insight, strength and sensitivity, and to conceal the time and effort involved in the process. The better this balance of form, content and craft, the more individual the work. The more individual the work, the more the song will resonate.

Appendix 1: Folio

The folio consists of two recorded albums of songs, *The Last Polaroid* and *Nylon String Songs*, accessed at the following link:

<https://www.dropbox.com/home/UTAS%20Masters%20Jenkins%20391518>

Appendix 2: Song Lyrics

Album 1: *The Last Polaroid*, 2017

1. *The Last Polaroid* 2:55
2. *Cartwheels* 3:32
3. *Everyone Loves Me* 2:36
4. *Kathleen* 3:35
5. *Barkly Square* 4:27
6. *Walking On Air* 3:18
7. *High Above The River* 3:44
8. *No Electronic Devices* 2:42
9. *Yea Tho Grief...* 3:56
10. *Winter Ball* 3:03

1. *The Last Polaroid*

May ghost ships sail into your empty wine bottles
May you know what to do when the time comes
May you know when to use your white flag
May you know where the pier ends
May you not be left hanging like bad art in a motel room
May you wander along the river Esk

Ruth

So the story ends
Beneath a forgotten cross
During climate extremes
With the last Polaroid

May ghost ships sail into your empty wine bottles
May you know what to do when the time comes

2. Cartwheels

All through the valley the mountaintop
No more dark alley no more blind spot
No need to stumble no need to rail
For now I tumble over hill and down dale
You see I found a way to get from A to Z
Where golden apples sway all day on golden trees
And even though I know I could walk or I could run
Over I go head to toe toward a blazing sun

Cartwheels up into town
Round and round
Cartwheels all over town
Up and down

The sad fountain the bruising sky
I do not sit with them I wave at them as I go by
All through the valley the mountaintop
No more dark alley no more blind spot

Cartwheels up into town
Round and round
Cartwheels all over town

I'm leaving all the fallow leaving all the shallow
Leaving all the badlands too
I've found a way to harness the best of every harvest
And I'm bringing it all in to you

Cartwheels

3. *Everyone Loves Me*

I'm a thief I'm a liar
I throw friendships on the fire –
Everyone loves me
I sleep around I swear
I ain't ever put a comb through my hair
Everyone loves me
I get on the booze and on the grass
And no one ever takes me to task
Everyone loves me

I got more so much more
How long you got?
I got more so much more

I call on you and you open the door
You call on me and I don't care anymore
Everyone loves me

I got more so much more
How long you got?
I got more so much more

I'm playing Vegas I played here before
All the stars rap on my dressing room door
Everyone loves me
I say I'm sorry more than I say I love you
I've been a bastard through and through
Everyone loves me

4. *Kathleen*

At times the dead seem more alive than I
I see them shoot across the sky
And in the faces of passers by
Kathleen

To know the measurements of each mistake
How cities crumble poets drown in lakes
A few more drinks and I'll no longer shake
Kathleen

Bring me the chandelier
Bring me the golden years
Bring me the head of Alfredo Garcia
Bring me to the point of tears

I watched you dance along the western shore
In silk and satin all the spoils of war
You remind the men of what they're fighting for
Kathleen

No it doesn't have to end like this
No it doesn't have to end like this

In conversation we conceal
What our silences will reveal
You push your fork around your favourite meal
Kathleen

5. Barkly Square

Well a nightingale sang tonight in Barkly Square
I fell from the Brunswick Hotel found her there
She were riding through the car park and singing to the rain
I put down my case so it began
Oh she sang a song so pure
She might have been channelling something I'm not sure
She opened up another channel to the human heart

You can tell how a heart's been broken
By the way it walks through the door
Some will meet your gaze some will search the floor
Some will want to know if it will ever happen again
Some will steel themselves for when it happens again
Knowing and needing and hoping on a cure
Knowing that it reaches you when you're unsure
She opened up another channel to the human heart

And roads will rise and meet up with clear bright eyes
To defy the dangers of the four chambers
Of the human heart

The very fountain of desire the very fountain of delight
Was she riding in and out of the shadows or in and out of the light?
It's another kind of failure it's another kind of fall
That leads you into the arms of someone you don't know at all
Knowing and needing and hoping on a cure
Knowing that I love you don't mean that much no more
She opened up another channel to the human heart

Well a nightingale sang tonight in Barkly Square
I fell from the Brunswick Hotel found her there
She were riding through the car park and singing to the rain

I put down my case so it began
Oh she sang a song so pure
She might have been channelling something I'm not sure
She opened up another channel to the human heart

And roads will rise and meet up with clear bright eyes
That defy the dangers of the four chambers
Of the human heart

Two little boats in the heavens
Two little boats on the seas
Two little boats together
Two little boats you and me

6. *Walking On Air*

I've been on the wire not on your wing
I've been the town crier crying
Singing to the choir just to sing

I've been circling the kitchen floor
The slumming Lord of the indoors
I've become the stay at home troubadour

I've been climbing walls to get the view
Coming up to breathe when you come through

Every time I see you
I'm walking on air everywhere

I've been fumbling for stones to throw
Been the broken arrow beside the bow
I've been hitting highs to feel the lows

Now I'm looking for the mountain pass
Now I'm thumbing through Leaves Of Grass

Every time I see you
I'm walking on air everywhere

No no longer sitting in the river
No no longer at the bottom of the seas
No no longer sitting in the gutter
No no longer down on my knees

Every time I see you
I'm walking on air everywhere

7. High Above The River

High above the river and the river won't deliver you back
It won't bring you back it won't bring you back
Oh high above the river and the river won't deliver you back
It won't bring you back it won't bring you back

Let the fair winds feed you
Let the moonlight seize you
Let the stars get you to my door
Let the emotions rescue
Let the oceans address you
Let them find someone who loves you more

High above the river and the river won't deliver you back
It won't bring you back it won't bring you back
Oh high above the river and the river won't deliver you back
It won't bring you back it won't bring you back

May the bells ring for you
May the chorus implore you
May your heart be the guiding track
Let the radio flood you with music
Let every note want to hold and seduce you
Let all the words that we wrote somehow sweep you back
If I could stop all the clouds coming into your eyes
Stop all the thunder from telling you lies
Swap all the wind and the rain for an open sky

High above the river and the river won't deliver you back
It won't deliver you back it won't bring you back
Oh high above the river and the river won't deliver you back
It won't you deliver you back it won't deliver you

8. *No Electronic Devices*

No electronic devices have yet to enthrall
Like pencil on paper or boot against ball
Or the closing of a summer's day
With your mother's dinner call
No electronic devices none at all

Summer days summer days
Summer days around the bend
Summer nights oh summer nights
Summer nights that never end

And yeah I show my age
All through the day
The rewinding of the cassette
The 90 minute TDK

No electronic devices can entertain
Like laughing with your lover through the summer rain
And knowing that the human hand
Might be the only thing to break a fall
No electronic devices none at all

Summer days summer days
Summer days around the bend
Summer nights oh summer nights

9. *Yea Tho Grief...*

Yea though grief be upon me I am prepared for grief
I've stolen all the fruit and I've smoked all the leaf
I've cracked the wall I've walked the hall to understand the brief
Yea though grief be upon me I am prepared for grief

Yea though pain be upon me I am prepared for pain
I've borne the slap of thunder and the sting in the rain
I've felt the heat and the raw defeat that goes down in Lovers Lane
Yea though pain be upon me I am prepared for pain

Yea though sin be upon me I am prepared for sin
I've bought all the ingredients and I know when they go in
I've licked the spoon I've sung its tune I've climbed the bowl to be within
Yea though sin be upon me I am prepared for sin

One knock to open the door
Two eyes to search the floor
Three little words to implore
The four winds to rock the shore
5 and 6 and 7 kisses lead to so much more

Yea though fear be upon me I'm not afraid
I've danced with all the demons and the dragons have been slayed
Buried deep in the castle keep with tears and with spade
Yea though fear be upon me I am not afraid

Yea though death be upon me I'm not prepared for death
I will damn it from the mountaintop and curse it beneath my breath
I'll raise the roof I'll be living proof you're never licked until you've got nothing left
Yea though death be upon me I'm not prepared for death

10. Winter Ball

Got lost in what went down
So caught up in conversation
Waiting underground hoping to be found
Knowing we can rise above it all
At the Winter Ball

Took a carriage into town
Ran out of gas outside the station
Running through the fair everyone was there
From the Lord Mayor all the way down
At the Winter Ball

Shake it Shake it
Shake the tallest tree
At times you get luckier than you would ever hope to be
Waiting on the ground hoping to be found
Knowing it could all ring so true
At the Winter Ball

Album 2: Nylon String Songs, April 16, 2018

- 11. Innocence Lost is Never Regained 2:09*
- 12. Tubby Spiderman in Madrid 2:29*
- 13. When I Was on the Moon 2:09*
- 14. The Sun is Always Drinking 2:44*
- 15. I'll See You in the Stars Tonight 2:14*
- 16. Beware the Gates of Heaven 2:04*
- 17. A Wedding Waltz 2:47*
- 18. Monday Nights at the Retreat Hotel 1:59*
- 19. Don't You Know the Night 2:14*
- 20. Hastings 2:37*

11. Innocence Lost is Never Regained

In the love letters that you find
In the thoughts that never crossed your mind
In the pent up low pressured air
In the grey receding hair

In the hurt that hurt people deliver
In the deserted house down by the river
In the lines around the eyes
In the tunnel of lies

You hear no bell
You see no train
Innocence lost is never regained

In the moments you used to treasure
In the sky that once went on forever
In the darkness without a sound
I up and left town

You hear no bell
You see no train
Innocence lost is never regained

12. When I Was on the Moon

When I was on the moon and the earth hung high
Time would slow when you'd slip by
And gather 'round the globe
Twist itself until
We could kiss and time stand still

When I was on the seas and the seas were high
With waves as black as black as the sky
I'd raise a tattered sail
Hold the wheel with all my will
For when we kiss time stands still

When I was on the land the land did shake
The wind did blast the boughs did break
I'd cross a crooked mile
Climb a broken hill
For when we kiss time stands still

And now I'm in your arms and the earth rests
The seas are calm and I'll do my level best
To silence your alarms
Fill you full of daffodils
For when we kiss time stands still

13. Tubby Spiderman in Old Madrid

Tubby Spiderman in old Madrid
It's not what you're doing it's what you once did
With headphones full of Veedon Fleece
And a backpack full of Belgian cheese

I went out through the fields
Trying not to sink
I spoke with the birds
And they told me what they think

There's a house with a thousand windows
Looking over the canal
It's warm and dry up there high above the smell
I found the Duke's Forest full of chocolate and cream
I had no idea where I was going or where I'd been

I went out through the fields
Trying not to sink
I spoke with the birds
And they told me what they think

"How long can you spend dying at the desk
instead of flying through the wilderness"?
Tubby folksinger up on Northcote Hill
It's not what you did it's what you're doing still

14. The Sun is Always Drinking

The Sun is always drinking
Lapping up the water like a thirsty lion
The sun has been known to be drunk
In its own sunshine

The Moon is always trembling
Worrying over what it did the very night before
The Moon has been known to go knocking
From door to door

The earth is always aching
Aching to be left alone
The earth wants to pick up its bat and ball
And go home

Shake off the world tonight for me
Shake off the world tonight for you
Shake off the world tonight so we can see what is sound and true

When so many people call you
Why do you call the ones who won't?
When so many people love you
Why do you recall the ones who don't?

Shake off the world tonight for me
Shake off the world tonight for you
Shake off the world tonight so we can see what is sound and true

The sun is always drinking
Lapping up the water like a thirsty lion
The sun has been known to be drunk
In its own sunshine

15. I'll See You in the Stars Tonight

All the world's an actor
All the world's a stage
We find in the footnotes
What we lose on the page
I'm guided by the silence
Up along the stave
And I'll see you in the stars tonight

All the world's a card game
All the world's been trumped
By little hands
And a very big rump
I know we deserve a kicking
But we've been thumped
And I'll see you in the stars tonight.

Falling falling
Far from home
Falling falling on your own

All the world's in trouble
All the world's gone wrong
When I thought that we could
Somehow get along
And although we're not together
We've yet to cross our Rubicon
And I'll see you in the stars tonight

16. Beware the Gates of Heaven

Beware the Gates of heaven
And the new security outside
They puff up tall and are so mean and small
'Bout who gets in the line
They got their jobs just like anybody ever got their jobs
They got connections they got family ties
It's not what you know
St Peter told me so
He thanked me for the drink
Said I need time to think
And he set off for the wild blue yonder...

Beware the mouths of old men
Who fly on the public purse
The platforms raised the Gods praised
The science reversed
They got their jobs just like anybody ever got their jobs
They got connections they got family ties
It's not what you know
Superman told me so
He took off his cape
He took the fire escape
And he set off for the wild blue yonder...

17. A Wedding Waltz

The sun sets so each regret
Can make peace with the moon
The sun will rise so lover's eyes
Can meet across the room

Girl for girl Boy for boy
Upon the dancing bay
Here's to someone who'll
Make you happy too
So the clouds can roll away

Some are told which heart to hold
In very strange lands
The plain thing about wedding rings
Is they fit every hand

Girl for girl Boy for boy
Upon the dancing bay
Here's to someone who'll
Make you happy too
So the clouds can roll away
Yes yes yes

18. Monday Nights at the Retreat Hotel

Come Monday nights I wonder
Who is coming under
Out of the rain and thunder like me

Tuesdays are best forgotten
And so I do some washing
Separating colours and cottons naturally

Wednesdays are for the ramblers
The lovelorn gamblers
The emotional baggage handlers lost at sea

The rest of the week plays out down a familiar path
I do a little shopping and on Sundays I draw a bath

‘Cause Mondays are for the winners
And very clean folk singers
The saints and the sinners
The bar flies the beginners

Stretched across the front bar like me
At the Retreat hotel

19. Don't You Know the Night

Don't you know the night
Swims in stars
In washed up streets and sunken bars
In broken chords spilt by cheap guitars
Don't you know the night
Paints the square
With laughter thrown high into the air
From inside the fountain as you tie up your hair

Don't you know the storms
Come and go
The lightning strikes the rumbling show
And when you're lost

Don't you know the night
At its best
Puts the darkest days to rest
With a simple turn with a slow caress

20. Hastings

If it were wild, wild it would be in Hastings

If it were wild, wild it would be in Hastings

If it were wild, wild it would be in Hastings

If it were wild, wild it would be in Hastings

Before I sail off to sea

Before I sail off to sea

Oh my little baby won't you marry me in Hastings?

The sun was up and the moon was down in Hastings

I sat on the rocks 'til they swapped around in Hastings

I talked my troubles out walked my worries around Hastings

I threw my fears up I sang the stars down in Hastings

Before I sail off to sea

Before I sail off to sea

Oh my little baby won't you marry me in Hastings?

The fisherman's wife knows what to feel when the sea does spin

The fisherman's wife knows how to deal with a world that stings

The fisherman's wife knows which knife cuts through thick and thin

The fisherman's wife knows what to do when the boat don't come in

Before I sail off to sea

Before I sail off to sea

Oh my little baby won't you marry me in Hastings?

Appendix 3: Commercially released albums

Charles Jenkins and The Zhivagos, *The Last Polaroid* (2017), Silver Stamp Records

Charles Jenkins and The Amateur Historians, *The Past Is Never Where You Think You Left It* (2016), Silver Stamp Records

Charles Jenkins and The Zhivagos, *Too Much Water In The Boat* (2014), Silver Stamp Records

Charles Jenkins and The Zhivagos, *Love Your Crooked Neighbour With Your Crooked Heart* (2012), Silver Stamp Records

Charles Jenkins and The Zhivagos, *Walk This Ocean* (2010), Dust Devil Music

Charles Jenkins and The Zhivagos, *Blue Atlas* (2008), Dust Devil Music

Icecream Hands, *The Good China* (2007), Dust Devil Music

Charles Jenkins, *The City Gates* (2005), Parole Records

Charles Jenkins, *Bungalow* (2004), Parole Records

Icecream Hands, *You Can Ride My Bike - The Best of the Icecream Hands* (2004), Rubber Records

Icecream Hands, *Broken UFO* (2002), Rubber Records

Icecream Hands, *Sweeter Than The Radio* (1999), Rubber Records/BMG

Icecream Hands, *Memory Lane Traffic Jam* (1997), Rubber Records/BMG

Icecream Hands, *Travelling... Made Easy* (1993), Rubber Records/Shock

The Mad Turks from Istanbul, *Toast* (1990), Greasy Pop /Festival Records

The Mad Turks from Istanbul, *Café Istanbul* (1987), Greasy Pop /Festival Records

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